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IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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Christianity

IN THE

NINETEENTH CENTURY

(*The Boston–Lowell Lectures, 1900*)

BY

GEORGE C. LORIMER

Minister at Tremont Temple

Red of the dawn!
Is it turning a fainter red? So be it; but when shall we lay
The ghost of the brute that is walking and haunting us yet, and be free?
In a hundred, a thousand winters? Ah! what will our children be,
The men of a hundred thousand, a million summers away?

—*Tennyson*

PHILADELPHIA

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1900

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Dedicated

TO THE

Tremont Temple Church

AND

Congregation

Whose Loyal Faith and Liberal Spirit

HAVE PROVEN

An Unfailing Source of Encouragement and Inspiration

To Their Devoted Friend and Pastor

The Author

PREFATORY

LIKE Otto Pfleiderer's famous work, "*Das Urchristenthum*, etc., etc.," which was an elaboration of his "Hibbert Lectures," delivered in England (1887), this volume is the outgrowth of the "Lowell Lectures," given before the Lowell Institute, in Boston, during the last winter of the nineteenth century. The object of the author is to present Christianity as it has thought and toiled through a hundred eventful years; and as "all sublunary things are the vassals of vicissitude," to indicate what changes on its human side have taken place in creeds, expositions, rituals, and practical methods of endeavor. It has not been possible to enter the bypaths or to explore the obscure nooks of this history, and consequently only the highways and mountain summits have been surveyed. These, however, are sufficient. To have attempted more would have added no special value to the inquiries instituted, and would have substituted wearisome chronological annals for philosophical generalizations.

This book does not claim to be a picture gallery, where biographical portraits are unveiled for the instruction and inspiration of the multitude. Here and there on its pages sketches of leaders necessarily occur; but these are drawn, not for their own sake so much as for the light they may help to throw on momentous movements and far-reaching events. Lord Macaulay

was unquestionably right in saying: "A people which takes no pride in the noble achievements of remote ancestors will never achieve anything worthy to be remembered by remote descendants"; and the triumphs of contemporaries are equally entitled to grateful homage and appreciation. It is not denied that Christianity during the nineteenth century has been defended, championed, and extended by many notable and illustrious men and women; but it is not the purpose of this volume to discuss their merits nor to eulogize their services. This were a delightful task to perform; but it is not contemplated in these lectures. Here we have to do exclusively with Christianity, with its progress, with its success and failures, with its variations and alliances, and not primarily with those spiritual chiefs and captains who have marshaled its hosts, and by their genius lent a lustre to its banners, nor with those great, though misguided, intellects that have converted its "faith into faction," have divorced reason from passion, and have flamed like comets broken away from their divinely appointed path in the heavens.

It is likewise to be borne in mind by the reader that the author is compelled to deal with Christianity as he finds it in the nineteenth century; not with it as he may suppose it ought to be, but as it is; not only as it appears in his eyes, but as it is in the eyes of others; not with it as a theory but as a fact; and not necessarily with it as revealed in the New Testament but as it is seen in history. And yet let it not be feared that this method—the really scientific method—may endanger truth, and lend itself to erroneous conceptions of the religion which our Lord established in the earth. There

is in reality no such peril. Rather may we feel sure that this course will open the way for thoughtful discrimination, and assist in fixing the terms in which the faith of the Gospels must finally be stated.

Throughout his investigations the writer of these pages has been moved by a desire to ascertain how far Jesus Christ rules in the theology and in the social life of the age. It is well known that at the beginning he was not only the source but was the very center of the religion he proclaimed, and that all of its institutions derived their value and significance from him. And there are not lacking signs that he is now being gradually restored to this unique position. His re-enthronement in the doctrine of the church, with the tribute of modern literature to his moral greatness, and the constant appeal of the suffering poor and of the struggling proletariat to his compassion and justice, constitute one of the most brilliant chapters in the history of the nineteenth century. It reads like a romance, this coming of the Lord to his own again. In the present volume all this will be made clear, as well as the effect of this new epiphany,[1] like a new transfiguration on the mount, upon the development of Christian thought and brotherhood. While its remarkable results are not to be anticipated in these prefatory sentences, and while they are not wholly without drawbacks, it may with confidence be assumed that they are of the deepest significance and of the highest value. Under the influence of the re-enthroned Christ the church is becoming more and more spiritual, more and more active, more and more catholic; and while we are not approaching the time

[1] Jeremy Taylor.

seen by St. John, when the heavenly world shall dispense with its temple, and never shall until the consummation and the final glory, still the temple is becoming more and more a living organism, whose gates are open wide in welcome to "all peoples who do dwell beneath the sun." This much may be permitted by way of introduction, but it is not necessary that this forecast should go any farther. It may, however, be added, that if any reader seeks in these pages, and in the progress they record, the assuring evidences that the night is far spent, that the battle against wrong has already been ended victoriously, that there is little left for the new century to undertake, and that time itself has grown old and moribund, he will be disappointed and will be speedily undeceived. Rather while he reads and reads will he be led to sing with Charles Kingsley:

While a slave bewails his fetters;
  While an orphan pleads in vain;
While an infant lisps his letters,
  Heir of all the ages' gain;
While the lip grows ripe for kissing;
  While a moan from man is wrung;
Know by every want and blessing,
  That the world is young.

SPECIAL NOTE

THE acknowledgments of the author are due the Rev. Philip L. Jones, D. D., for careful supervision of these pages as they passed through the press; and to Rev. Ph. Vincent, Harriet Tilly (Madame Cadot), and Rev. H. Andou, of France, and to that noble friend of missions in Germany, Frau H. Alberts, for their assistance in gathering statistics, and in making translations from various works not within his reach. To one and all he tenders his hearty thanks.

G. C. L.

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I

THE DUSK AND DAWN

Wild, wild wind, wilt thou never cease thy sighing?
Dark, dark night, wilt thou never wear away?
Cold, cold church, in thy death-sleep lying,
The Lent is past, thy Passion here, but not thine Easter Day.

Peace, faint heart, though the night be dark and sighing;
Rest, fair corpse, where thy Lord himself hath lain;
Weep, dear Lord, above thy bride low lying;
Thy tears shall wake her frozen limbs to life and health again.

—*Kingsley.*

I

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IN THE TWILIGHT OF TWO CENTURIES

To some people it is not quite clear whether this year, 1900, forms part of the old century or of the new, or whether it is an intercalary year, a kind of "no man's land," belonging to neither. They have found the problem perplexing, if not fascinating, and possibly, to them at least, as bewildering as the delimitation of frontiers between such countries as Alaska and Canada, or Venezuela and Great Britain. But however serious the issue may seem to them, it is not of sufficient interest to detain us, for whatever conclusion is reached, one thing is certain—this season marks a culminating period in the march of the ages that serves as a Lookout Mountain, from whose summit the past century may be advantageously surveyed. Mariners have frequently to steer for weary and doubtful days by dead reckoning, but they are always relieved when the mists disperse and they are able to "take the sun" and their "bearings" as well. Generations also, like ships, may pursue their way through haze and fog, ascertaining their whereabouts only by unsatisfactory methods; but when a new century is dawning, then conditions are favorable to secure scientific observations, and then the sun should be taken and the position and course of humanity be determined as accurately as possible. This very serviceable task

will undoubtedly be undertaken during the next few months by various social navigators; and, in harmony with their spirit, it is contemplated, in the studies on which we are now entering, to discover where we are religiously, on what spiritual seas we are sailing, and to what haven of faith we are voyaging.

The Rev. Dr. Croly, in a sermon preached at St. Paul's, 1844, termed the Lutheran Reformation "the third great birth of time," and unless we are inexcusably infatuated, the nineteenth century will be described by future historians as the fourth. While in some respects its glories may not compare with those of its three brilliant predecessors,—distinguished by the nativity of cosmos, the nativity of Christ, and the spiritual renaissance,—nevertheless it has achieved unique victories quite its own, for it has mastered not a few of creation's forces, has extended almost to infinity our conception of the universe, and has not only redeemed Christianity from various superstitious accretions, but has applied her healing principles to the wounds of society in a way at once original and sympathetic.

The last hundred years have witnessed the progress of "inventions and discoveries which abridge distance, which annihilate time, which extend commerce, which aid agriculture, which save labor, which transmit speech, which turn the darkness of the night into the brilliancy of the day, which alleviate pain, which destroy disease, and which lighten even the infirmities of age."[1] We are living in a new world, not meaning by the expression what it usually signifies, this wonderful American continent, but new in a sense applicable to transatlantic

[1] MacMaster, "Hist. People of U. S.," Vol. I., p. 3.

lands as well as to our own; new in its methods of locomotion, of transportation, of illumination, of communication, of exploration, and of production and distribution. Instead of the tedious stage-coaches and canal boats of a hundred years ago, we have mighty railways and swift steamers; instead of the weekly or monthly post, penetrating with difficulty rural districts and the borders of the wilderness, we have the telegraph and the telephone, by which thought and speech are transmitted through forests and under oceans; instead of the pen, the needle, the hand-press, and the primitive implements of husbandry, we have the typewriter, the sewing-machine, the steam presses, and the marvelous mechanism for harvesting; and instead of flaring oil lamps, linkboys, and uncertain pine torches, we have gas and electricity and such startling power over light that we can illuminate the larynx and the stomach, and through the Röntgen rays can render opaque substances transparent. By geology, we have reconstructed the popular ideas of time; by astronomy, we have gained a magnificent conception of space; by spectrum analysis, we have been able to determine even the relative heat and chemical constitution of the heavenly bodies; by anæsthetics, we have been able to give to humanity the benefits of the most delicate surgery; while by antiseptics, we have rendered comparatively safe the most difficult operations; by photography, we have been able to bring within the range of telescopic vision stars too distant for the eye to reach; and by evolution, we have been able to rise to the level of an entrancing view of harmonious and orderly development, which, whatever may be its errors in details, teaches that,

> The world was built in order,
> And the atoms march in tune,

and has imparted to law an awful and unparalleled sanctity and awakened the hope that, as all things have moved from the low to the high, so society, at last, sympathizing with the upward trend, shall realize in itself the fairest dreams of social renewal and of human happiness. As we think over the many transcendent things which have been wrought and try in some degree to comprehend the strangeness of the new world which our children are to inhabit, we can readily understand the pardonable enthusiasm of the poet when, like a weird minstrel, he sings:

> The old times are dead and gone and rotten ;
> The old thoughts shall nevermore be thought ;
> The old faiths have failed and are forgotten ;
> The old strifes are done, the fight is fought ;
> And with a clang and roll the new creation
> Bursts forth, 'mid tears and blood and tribulation.

But not all of the old faiths have been forgotten; one, at least, retains its hold on the reverence and conscience of mankind; and among the many transforming wonders of the century now ending, not the least, but rather ranking with the greatest, must be classed the vitality, the flexibility, the fertility, the extension, the expansion, the self-abnegation, the self-reliance, and the self-emancipation of the Christian religion.

It is to the study of Christianity in the nineteenth century that these lectures are devoted, to a review of its vicissitudes and victories, its changes and variations, its successes and failures, its enterprises and aspirations,

its alliances and antagonisms, its vagaries and excrescences; and, indeed, to everything that can throw light on the significance of its more recent history, and enable us in some measure to determine the character of its essential genius, to estimate its value and duty to society, and to foreshadow its destiny in the coming age. And I approach this exalted theme, not in the spirit of one who holds a brief for any particular denomination, not even as an evangelical Protestant, nor as one bound to make out a case conformable to his personal bias, prejudices, or wishes: I shall speak to you simply as a student, stating the facts, whether they are as I would like them to be or not, and describing the conclusions that have been reached and the present trend and tendency of religious thought and life, whether they accord with my preconceptions or with yours, or whether they are in the main contrary to what we have expected or could have desired. In my opinion, the prime qualification for the task I am entering on is transparent veraciousness, and no one should undertake it unless he is ready, if necessary, to crush his own idols and break with his own traditions. A spirit less candid, truth-seeking, and generous would fall far below the demands of this occasion, and would rob the treatment of the grave subject before us of every claim to the serious attention of thoughtful men and women.

Auguste Sabatier, writing the "Outlines of a Philosophy," reminds the world of the perennial interest which attaches to the theme I have chosen. He says:

> No one nowadays underestimates the social importance of the religious question. Philosophers, moralists, politicians, show themselves to be alive to it; they see it dominating all others. . .

Who, at the close of his secret meditations, on the confines of his knowledge, at the end of his affections, of the joys he has tasted, of the trials he has endured, has not seen rising before him the religious question—I mean the mysterious problem—of his destiny? Of all questions, it is the most vital. . . Has life a meaning? Is it worth living? Our efforts—have they an end? Our works and our thoughts—have they any permanent value to the universe? This problem, which one generation may evade, returns with the next.

And emphatically it confronts us with singular imperativeness to-day. While there may have been a disposition, and that too, not very long ago, to waive it aside as no longer within the circle of living issues, that time has gone and once more the leaders of thought are earnestly occupied with what Sabatier calls the religious question. But if justice is to be done to this momentous question, it must be examined, not alone in the light of speculative theology, ecclesiastical tradition, and idealistic psychology; it must be carefully studied in the actual field of history, as an operative force in human affairs. And so far as my reading and observation go, there has been no period so rich in material for such investigations since the apostolic age as the one on whose amazing transformations the curtain of time is descending.

To understand what Christianity has been and has wrought during the past hundred years demands that we familiarize ourselves with its condition in the twilight of two centuries—in the evening twilight of the eighteenth and in the morning twilight of the nineteenth. These closing and opening seasons, this dusk and dawning, are related as prophets to the aftertime. They are as the Isaiahs, the Jeremiahs, and the Malachis

of the Bible, foreshadowing and anticipating the march of events. To comprehend their speech is to possess the key which unlocks the mystery of many astounding departures and upheavals. The end, with few exceptions, can always be seen from the beginning, provided the meaning of the beginning has itself been fathomed. Each generation has at its heart "the potency and the promise" of its successor; and the evening is generally a fair harbinger of the morning, and evening and morning together usually determine the character of the day. Naturally, therefore, we direct our inquiries to the two twilights for the purpose of deciding at the outset certain preliminaries, without which the subsequent history of Christianity would, at the best, be vague and obscure.

The eighteenth century was destitute neither of great men nor of noble deeds; but somehow its annals and memories do not thrill and arouse us as do those of the fifteenth or sixteenth. Its moral atmosphere during its earlier stages is enervating, its political life ignoble, and its religious spirit cold and selfish. As a distinct period, it is eminently respectable, painfully conventional and commonplace, and when it breaks forth into unexpected intellectual brilliancy, the light is chilly or is rendered dazzling only by its intense profanity, impurity, and skepticism. I am not overlooking exceptions, nor am I unmindful of the evangelical revival which took its rise in the midst of its poison marshes, and of which I shall speak later on. It is to the general character and temper of this century, particularly during the first fifty or sixty years, that I direct attention, knowing very well that there is rarely a desert without a refreshing oasis

somewhere. But though the oases be numerous, it is impossible to escape the impression that the monotonous wilderness dominates most of the period. Doctor Clarke says truly: "Human kind never puts forth exceptional energy without paying for it in reaction," as "the vigor of the first Christian age was followed by the comparative lifelessness of the second."[1] And the eighteenth century was the century of reaction. It comes to us as a state between two worlds, "one dead, the other powerless to be born." The noble heroes of the Commonwealth had passed from the view of men; the struggle for the succession had ended with the triumph of William and Mary; the fierce religious conflicts, often reaching to the grandeur of tragedy, had subsided with the enactment of toleration; and the tremendous strain under which Europe had labored, and which had been felt in America also, had at last relaxed, and there ensued on the continent as well as in England a condition of things approximating to lethargy and exhaustion.

Writing of this period, a recent author gives this depressing illustration of its weariness and dullness: "From the time of Algernon Sidney to that of Burke, it holds not a breath of that larger inspiration and passion which can make a local controversy of the moment a treasure for all time."[2] And this was only too true of its religious life. "In the eighteenth century . . . the Anglican Church had conquered Romanism; Puritanism had sunk out of sight deep into the hearts of the ignored people. . . The church had won the day and held the field. And the first thing it did was to

[1] "Christianity," p. 106. [2] Scudder, "Social Ideals," p. 92.

repudiate its old relationships. It sought no wedlock with poverty, such as Francis sought and Giotto painted in his great fresco. . . The church had become a vast machine for the patronage of morality and the promotion of her own officers. How admirable an investment is religion! Such is the burden of their pleading. Sure gauge of respectability here and comfort hereafter." [1]

The author we are quoting furnishes an instructive example of the preaching most highly esteemed during these melancholy days, in which one seems to feel "the Sermon on the Mount receding into infinite space." These are some of the edifying excerpts:

> The principal point of wisdom in the conduct of human life is so to use the enjoyments of this present world as that they may not themselves shorten the period wherein 'tis allowed us to enjoy them. . . We are not obliged to seek the kingdom of God *wholly* or *only* in a total and absolute exclusion of all other desires (as some melancholy, well-disposed persons may be apt to imagine), but only that we are to seek it chiefly and in the first place. . . We are required only to retrench our vain and foolish expenses; not to sell all and give to the poor, but to be charitable out of the superfluity of our plenty; not to lay down our lives or even the comfortable enjoyments of life, but to forsake the unreasonable and unfruitful pleasures of sin.[2]

A sleek, comfortable, prudent kind of piety this, such as had not been baptized in the sacrificial spirit of the Cross, and which would have given a very poor account of itself if it had been exposed to the fires of martyrdom.

Christianity had indeed fallen on days of deplorable

[1] Scudder, "Social Ideals," p. 93. [2] Clarke's "Sermons," Ser. XVII.

degradation. Of the godless condition of the nation, even Oliver Goldsmith writes. His testimony is sad enough :

> No person who has traveled will contradict me when I aver that the lower orders of mankind in other countries testify on every occasion the profoundest awe of religion, while in England they are scarcely awakened to a sense of its duties, even in circumstances of the greatest distress. This dissolute and fearless conduct foreigners are apt to attribute to climate and constitution. May not the vulgar, being pretty much neglected in our exhortations from the pulpit, be a conspiring cause? Our divines seldom stoop to their mean capacities; and they who want instruction most find least in our religious assemblies.[1]

That is, the shepherds were indifferent to the needs of the flock, and would scarcely condescend to provide pasture lands for the sheep of inferior stock, whose wool was too scant to be worth the shearing. Nor is this surprising when it is remembered that, as late as 1797, professors of religion in high places contemplated with apprehension the enlightenment of the people through the agency of the Sabbath-school. One of this class wrote in the "Gentleman's Magazine" that the Sunday-school "is subversive of that order, that industry, that peace and tranquillity which constitute the happiness of society"; and that "so far from deserving encouragement and applause, it merits our contempt and ought to be exploded as the vain, chimerical institution of a visionary projector." And in the last year of the eighteenth century, the Bishop of Rochester, while professing to favor these schools, yet inconsistently enough warns his clergy against them, because in them "the

[1] Sinclair, "Leaders of Thought," p. 174.

minds of the children of the very lowest order are enlightened—that is to say, taught to despise religion and the laws and all subordination." He also denominates them "schools of rebellion and Jacobinical politics, that is to say, schools of atheism and disloyalty."

If such sentiments as these could find utterance at a time when the era of spiritual stagnation was drawing to a close, we can very readily credit Goldsmith's picture of an earlier day, when immorality and profaneness were so notorious that England was regarded as having apostatized from the Christian faith.[1] Every church or nation, whatever its professions, if it neglects the religious training of the masses, has unquestionably departed from the service of that Master whom the common people heard gladly, and who was anointed to preach good tidings to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, and to set at liberty them that are bound.[2]

Bishop Butler more than once comments on this wretched apostasy. In the preface to his "Analogy," he declared that in his time "it had come to be taken for granted that Christianity is not so much as a subject of inquiry, but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious." When delivering a charge to the clergy, he says: "The general decay of religion in this nation is now observed by every one, and has been for some time the complaint of all serious persons. . . As different ages have been distinguished by different sorts of particular errors and vices, the deplorable distinction of ours is an avowed scorn of religion in some and a growing disregard of it in the generality." Others concur with the bishop in his disheartening statements. Ac-

[1] Tyerman's "Wesley," p. 174. [2] Luke 4 : 18, 19.

cording to Lecky, "Addison pronounced it an unquestionable truth that there was less appearance of religion in England than in any neighboring State or kingdom, and that Montesquieu summed up his observations on English life by declaring, no doubt with great exaggeration, that there was no religion in England; that the subject, if mentioned in society, excited nothing but laughter; and that not more than four or five members of the House of Commons were regular attendants at church."[1] A fair estimate of the widespread laxity of belief may be inferred from the popularity of the deists and skeptics whose writings for a season were hailed with every token of approval. Bolingbroke, Shaftesbury, Woolston, Chubb, Collins, Tindal, and Toland—men of very unequal gifts and endowments—were eagerly listened to as they argued against the probability of a religion designed to be universal being founded on a perplexing series of historical evidences, or as they set forth the moral difficulties in the way of inspiration, or as they eloquently contended for the sufficiency of natural religion. But a yet deeper impression may be gained of the extent of this "falling away" from the prevailing corruption and black infamy of the social life which disgraced a country where the cross of Christ had been the symbol of its faith for centuries.

Every now and then some chronic pessimist obtrudes himself on the public with his harsh, strident philosophy of a world made for misery and becoming necessarily more wicked and miserable as it grows older. Of course, there are evils and enormities enough at the present

[1] Lecky, "England in Eighteenth Century," Vol. II., p. 579.

hour to afford some foundation for this doctrine of horror and despair. These, we admit, are terrible, and in view of our light and resources, are, in the main, inexcusable. But when they are placed side by side with the brutalities, cruelties, animalism, and heartless savagery of the eighteenth century, they are but specks of blackness on the surface of a golden sun. The Sabbath Day, considering the difference in the demands of the two civilizations, was then outrageously neglected in England, especially in the cities, and particularly among the upper classes of society. "People of fashion," according to Archbishop Secker, "especially of that sex which ascribes to itself most knowledge, have nearly thrown off all observation of the Lord's Day; . . and if to avoid scandal they sometimes vouchsafe their attendance on divine worship in the country, they seldom or never do it in town." Irreverence in the house of God was a common fault; and on the Lord's Day cabinet councils were frequently held and cabinet dinners sometimes given, and Sunday concerts—though they were not then called "sacred"—were enjoyed by the aristocracy, and even card parties were not unknown among its members. But the flagrant desecration of this holy day was only symptomatic of the very general desecration of nearly everything virtuous and of good report. The realm was a sink of all vices, and a sewer for all the baser passions. What shall be said of the moral tone of a community where one hundred and sixty different crimes were punishable with death, and where capital punishment was inflicted as plays are presented at theatres, publicly and for money? Tickets could be purchased for the exquisite privilege of seeing huzzies

whipped in the Bridewell, and women were often exposed in the pillory to the jeers and coarse insults of the brutal mob. Last century the impecunious inmates of debtors' prisons in England were generally dependent for bare subsistence upon the charity of the generous, who dropped their dole into baskets let down from the gaol windows, and not a few died from starvation. "In 1759, Doctor Johnson computed the number of these debtors at not less than twenty thousand, and asserted that one out of every four died every year from the treatment they received." "Prisoners rarely could escape, even if they broke loose, for mastiffs were kept to pursue them; and of a thousand sent in one assignment to Botany Bay of both sexes, four-fifths perished before land was reached."[1] So much of callous indifference to suffering and shamelessness prevailed that some parents would compel their children to walk to school with fourteen pounds' weight tied to their legs to keep them from running away. Drunkenness, profanity, gambling, and general profligacy reigned throughout the realm. Gentlemen high in position, representatives of government, like Oxford and Bolingbroke, were not ashamed to be intoxicated in the presence of their sovereign; while retailers of gin enticed the poorer classes to their ruin by the announcement that they could be made drunk for a penny and dead drunk for twopence.[2] The streets of the cities were insecure, Horace Walpole declaring, in 1751, that "One is forced to travel, even at noon, as if he were going to battle." Literature was to an unparalleled degree coarse, debasing, licentious,

[1] Harris, "Robert Raikes," p. 106.

[2] Lecky, "England in Eighteenth Century," Vol. I., p. 519.

as the pages of Smollett, Defoe, Fielding, and Coventry illustrate. Kings "lived publicly with mistresses"; the theatre was beginning to struggle out of the mire into which it was plunged at the Restoration, but it was still indescribably filthy; and while the loyal Commons were debating marriage bills, the real sanctity of the marriage tie had seriously declined among the more exclusive classes of the realm. Thus, from every point of view, the state of England, during a large portion of the eighteenth century, presents the appearance of an ominous, overhanging cloud, which, notwithstanding the flashes of genius—the genius of great writers, great preachers, great statesmen, and great soldiers—which frequently illuminated its darkness and for the moment made it look brilliant as sunrise, was charged with muttering thunders and heavy with possible wide-sweeping inundations and devastation.

It is usually assumed that at this time England was the darkest spot within the territories of civilized nations. This very nice point in comparative corruption and decay I do not feel called on to discuss. The capitals of Europe were all bad enough; and even if it could be proven that Great Britain was primate in the hierarchy of degeneracy, as many suspect, but which may be challenged, she was not alone in her sin, and certainly had many close competitors if she had no superiors. She may, therefore, be taken as a type, even though an exaggerated one, of the darkness, mental and moral, religious and social, which enswathed the most highly favored parts of the world over a hundred years ago.

If we turn to Germany, we find petty States, and with

them a small and meagre intellectual life. The glittering, high-heeled, periwigged style of the *grand monarque* had not yet lost its hold on the Teuton; the Olympus of Versailles still fascinated, and the liberator, Lessing, though born, had hardly yet appeared in the wilderness, exposing the vapidness and ridiculousness of the French stage and of French letters, and preparing the way for a new era in German thought, art, and religion. If we direct our eyes toward France itself, the one nation that, more than any other, influenced the culture, convictions, and conduct of continental peoples throughout the century, we are confronted by the Regent and Louis XV., with their erotic and putrid civilizations. There Holbach, Helvetius, and Diderot extolled atheism; and there cultivated men like Voltaire and Rousseau, who still professed to believe in natural religion, and ecclesiastics, such as Talleyrand, the Abbé Raynal, the Abbé Sieyès, and the Abbé Deschamps, had lost confidence in the dominant church, and while ridiculing its assumptions, fiercely attacked the supernatural claims of Christianity.[1] And yet, with the growth and advance of such opinions and sentiments, freedom of conscience was not permitted to multitudes of the people. Under Fleury, in 1728, to print anything contrary to papal bulls incurred a sentence to prison or the galleys. Protestants were condemned to incarceration for their faith. Children were separated from their parents, and women were flogged on account of heresy; and even in 1770, the bishops drew up a document to the king "on the dangerous consequences of liberty of thinking and printing." But it should be observed that those who

[1] Taine's "*Ancien Régime*," pp. 381–384.

were prominent in repudiating the authority of the church were not particularly concerned for the rights of their fellow-citizens suffering from persecution. As Hobbes and Bolingbroke in England were on the side of kings, so in France, Bayle denounced the democracy of the Huguenots; and Voltaire himself, with all his avowed liberalism, sympathized with royalty and all that it signifies, and could not approve of that universal suffrage which gives to a man who possesses neither house nor land a voice in the affairs of society. His spirit finds expression in such declarations as these: "The true public is always a minority. The rest is the vulgar." "What the populace requires is guidance, not instruction; it is not worthy of the latter." "We have never pretended to be enlightened shoemakers and servants."[1] Without going any further, a fair idea may be gained of the empires and kingdoms of the continent from these brief allusions. Unquestionably if the storm center, black and oppressive, was, during many gloomy years, in England, it was widely extended and overspread the most refined and cultured communities on earth. Its borders even overshadowed the colonial settlers in North America.

Dr. Leonard Woolsey Bacon says:

> The closing years of the eighteenth century show the lowest low-water mark of the lowest ebb-tide of spiritual life in the history of the American church. The demoralization of army life, the fury of political factions, the catch-penny materialist morality of Franklin, the philosophic deism of men like Jefferson, and the popular ribaldry of Tom Paine, had wrought together, with the other outward influences, to bring about a condition of things which to the eye of faith seemed almost desperate.

[1] Voltaire's "*Œuvres*," Vol. LI., p. 103, etc.

He quotes from Lyman Beecher's account of Yale College at the accession of President Dwight, 1795, this striking passage:

Before he came, the college was in a most ungodly state. The college church was almost extinct. Most of the students were skeptical and rowdies were plenty. Wine and liquors were kept in many rooms; intemperance, profanity, gambling, and licentiousness were common. . . That was the day of the infidelity of the Tom Paine school. Boys that dressed flax in the barn, as I used to, read Tom Paine and believed him; I read him and fought him all the way. But most of the class before me were infidels and called each other Voltaire, Rousseau, D'Alembert, etc.

We are also reminded that there were only two among the students of Princeton College who professed belief in Christianity in 1782, and that the General Assembly, 1798, thus portrays the prevailing impiety: "The profligacy and corruption of the public morals have advanced with a progress proportionate to our declension in religion. Profaneness, pride, luxury, injustice, intemperance, lewdness, and every species of debauchery and loose indulgence greatly abound." Theodore Parker, in one of his addresses, said:

It is easy to praise the fathers of New England, easier to praise them for virtues they did not possess than to discriminate and fairly judge those remarkable men. . . Let me mention a fact or two. It is recorded in the probate office that, in 1678, at the funeral of Mrs. Mary Norton . . . fifty-one gallons and a half of the best Malaga wine were consumed by the mourners. . . Towns provided intoxicating drink at the funeral of their paupers. . . Affairs had come to such a pass that, in 1742, the General Court forbid the use of wine and rum at funerals.

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[1] Bacon, "Hist. Am. Christianity," pp. 230, 231.

Edwards testifies regarding his own town, Northampton: "There was more degeneracy among the young than ever before." "Licentiousness, for some years, greatly prevailed among the youth." "The Sabbath was extensively profaned and the decorum of the sanctuary not unfrequently disturbed." And Jefferson witnesses to the degradation of the press: "Nothing can now be believed which is seen in a newspaper. Truth itself becomes suspicious by being put into that polluted vehicle."[1] It is not necessary to quote from the "Autobiography" of Peter Cartwright, or from the "Charges" and others writings of Bishop Meade, for confirmation of this gloomy picture of atheism, infidelity, coarseness, profanity, drunkenness, and general dissoluteness. The colors are black enough and need no deepening.

But we may, in passing, be permitted to inquire whether we have not, in the deplorable immoralities of communities founded by scrupulously conscientious Christians, an illustration of what is likely to follow when their descendants carry the principles of righteous restraint into unreasoning asceticism. The Puritan colonists for some years prior to the Revolution were noted for the most singular inconsistencies in conduct and for a casuistry at once artificial and misleading, and which can only be accounted for on the supposition that, however deeply versed they may have been in the doctrines of grace, they had never given much sober thought to the doctrines of ethics. MacMaster presents a portrait of the grim religionist of those times which is well worth reproducing:

[1] Dorchester, "Problem of Relig. Progress," pp. 195, 196.

He held it to be an abomination to read a novel, to see a play, to go to a dance, to make a jest, to sing a comic song, to eat a dinner cooked on Sunday, or to give a present on Christmas Day. Yet he would, at times, so far forget his austerity as to play a game of draughts with his wife, or have a romp of fox and geese with his children. His conscience did not smite him when he drank palm tea at a quilting, or listened to the achievements of his better half at the spinning match. He drank ale and cider at the apple-paring bees; he laughed as loudly as any one when, at the corn-husking, the lucky finder of the red ear kissed his favorite daughter. But the moment the fiddles were produced, he went home to his pipe and sermons, or to a long talk with the schoolmaster.[1]

The shreds and tatters of this kind of casuistry I have frequently met with during the earlier years of my ministry in remote rural communities. I have known young girls to be excluded from the church on account of dancing, while their accusers were retained in membership, although they were whisky distillers and whisky drinkers and even worse. Professors of religion who held slaves in some parishes would not hold fellowship with those brethren who visited the theatre; and in others, men might chew tobacco in church, but they must not presume to smile. Now, it is worth noticing that this crude and contradictory asceticism has always had a fatal tendency toward irreligion and infidelity. And in this, as in so many other things, extremes meet. What illegitimate self-indulgence leads to, unreasonable self-mortification sometimes leads to as well. In France, on the one hand, excessive laxity in religious opinions and unrestrained enjoyments promoted atheism, lawlessness, and public corruption; and in New England, on the other, the suppression of natural gladness, the in-

[1] MacMaster, "People of the United States," p. 20.

sistence on irrational distinctions between various means of recreation and the persistent endeavor to array humanity in the strait-jacket of an incoherent asceticism resulted in hypocrisy, viciousness, and derisive infidelity. Heinrich Heine relates the tradition of the clerics and the nightingale, which conveys a moral not inappropriate to this particular folly. During the council of Basel, 1433, a company of clerics were walking in a wood near the town and were arguing about annates, expectatives, and reservations, when they were saluted by the caroling and sobbing notes of the nightingale. They were at first charmed, they felt in a blessed mood, and their sympathies were quickened beneath the bleak snows of their icy scholarship. But at last one among them, more pious than the rest, concluded that the bird could be none other than an emissary of the devil, seeking to divert them from their Christian converse by its seducing strains. He straightway began to exorcise the evil spirit, and it is recorded that the nightingale immediately rose laughingly from his perch in a blossoming lime tree, and, as he flew away, replied: "Yes, I am an evil spirit." They, however, who had been entranced by the song sickened that very day and died shortly thereafter.[1] And from their dolorous fortune the monkish chronicler would have us learn that to yield even to innocent earthly delights carries with it a fatal ending.

But I interpret the legend differently. When we reject the music that God sends, and count that evil which refreshes and delights, we are abandoned to our illusion as the nightingale abandoned the prelates and the doc-

[1] Heine, "Religion and Philosophy in Germany," p. 26.

tors ; and then speedily the spiritual life pines and sickens, while not far off waits the tomb, ready to swallow up our poor dead faith. And thus the colonists of the eighteenth century in their protest against the world, the flesh, and the devil, came in their blind zeal to include things which in themselves and of themselves were not vicious, and certainly were not more vicious than some things which they allowed, and in a little while the church gave signs of declining spiritual health and even of approaching death.

But she was not doomed to waste away and perish, either in New England or in the great countries beyond the sea. Even when her condition was most alarming, when her pulse was lowest, and when the vital spark seemed but to glimmer, even then refreshing and renewing agencies were being called into activity. We have been groping our way through the night of the eighteenth century, and the painful journey has been indispensable to an appreciation of its evening twilight, a twilight blending with the dawning of the nineteenth and having in its bosom the promise of Christian rejuvenescence and advancement ; and we are now ready to consider the character of this twilight, to observe its beginnings deep in the heart of night, and to trace its slow and steady progress toward the morning.

Its first gray sign of hope appeared where least it could have been expected—in the religious firmament. A spiritual quickening of the most extraordinary scope and sweep preceded the other mighty movements which were destined to revolutionize society. At a time when the educated world regarded the victory of deism as complete ; and when orthodoxy was dumb on the doc-

trines of its creed and was content to skirmish along the outposts of the faith; and at the time when Englishmen were being enriched by slavery and the universities were being degraded by the learned ignorance and inane indifference described by Gibbon, suddenly the morning began to peep through the night. The natal place of the new revival was none other than the famous Oxford, from whose classic halls Wycliffe's reforming company of poor priests had gone forth in the fourteenth century and in whose bosom a very different agitation was to originate in the nineteenth. Lincoln College, the special seat of the gracious quickening, was founded by Bishop Fleming, who entertained the greatest horror of everything approaching the heresy of Wycliffe, and whose successor, Bishop Rotherham, enjoined the expulsion of any Fellow convicted of departure from the Anglican establishment; and their amazement and indignation can readily be imagined could they have foreseen that Methodism would be born and cradled within its walls. What a shock they would have experienced had they been able with prophetic vision to anticipate the "Godly Club" and the work of John Wesley, a work which attained not only great importance in England, but also in North America and on the continent of Europe, and whose animating principle has been thus defined by the German, Schneckenburger, as "the subjectivity of direct feeling and of inward experience," in contradistinction "to the subjectivity of the practical intellect" as accentuated by Arminianism and Socinianism.

The story of Wesley's life has been often told, and need not here be repeated; but the genesis of his spir-

itual devotion may well claim our attention. In 1727, he read Law's "Serious Call and Christian Perfection," and it wrought a great change in his feelings. "I was convinced more than ever," he says, "of the impossibility of being half a Christian, and determined to be all-devoted to God, and to give him all my soul, my body, and my substance." And a biographical writer adds: "The light flowed in so mightily on his soul that everything appeared in a new view." [1] "His philosophy and theology were permanently elevated and enriched through the familiarity which he had gained with some at the least of the writers to whom Law had introduced him, as well as through the direct influence of Law himself."

But there was another influence which was destined to determine in no small degree his religious development, and one that brings into relief the solidarity as well as the indestructibility of spiritual forces. It was in 1735, that John and his brother Charles accompanied General Oglethorpe to Georgia, and while on the outward voyage were strangely impressed by the deep piety, fidelity, courage, and singleness of heart of some Moravian emigrants, headed by their bishop, Nitschmann. On his return to England a year or so later, he sought out Peter Böhler, one of this brotherhood, whose intercourse was of so decisive a character that it added to Wesley's spiritual fervor, and in effect seemed to produce something like a second and more real conversion. Not satisfied, however, with his attainments in the divine life, he determined to visit Herrnhut, the chief seat of Moravianism, and hold con-

[1] Riggs, "Wesley," p. 22.

verse with its most godly and brilliant representative. This fellowship with Count Zinzendorf brought with it soul refreshing; and though afterward, in 1740, Wesley broke with the Moravians, and in some respects changed his views of both Böhler and Zinzendorf, there can be no doubt of his indebtedness to them for much that rendered his own character blameless and beautiful.

It is interesting, in this connection, to observe the intimate relations between the spiritual experiences of various periods and of all lands. The Moravians were the remnants of the Hussites and the Waldenses, the survival under a different name of the heroic orders of Christians who, throughout the dark ages, never permitted the vital spark of piety to perish, and never abandoned the rights of conscience at the mandate of arrogant intolerance. By sanctity and spiritual simplicity they were allied with the earliest martyrs and the latest; and at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the holy fire of faith burned on their altar, from whose flame, before its close, there should be kindled a new spirit of devotion in England and America. What effect the "pietism" of Germany may have had upon them, and how far Spener, Schade, Francke, Breithaupt, who added lustre to the earlier days of the University at Halle, may have modified their opinions, I am not called on to decide; but unquestionably the whole school, through Zinzendorf, became a determining factor in the religious revival of the century.

But the revival itself, whatever its origin, was wonderful, alike in its extent and in its power. What the mechanical morals of sleepy churchmen could not do, this gracious quickening, ablaze with love and zeal,

accomplished. Poor, neglected miners heard for the first time that this world is the outcome of divine love, and that they themselves were not forgotten in the Father's compassion. All this was as much a revelation to them as the preaching of the apostles was to the slaves of Rome. They began to feel a new dignity and to breathe a new hope. Vast multitudes gathered on heath and common to listen to the words of Wesley or of Whitefield, and everywhere striking conversions occurred and reprobates were moved to repentance. Not a few of the clergy, particularly of those who had no sympathy with evangelical doctrine, looked with suspicion on the unusual excitement, for then, as now, a gospel that agitates the conscience and shakes the soul out of its indifference, and does anything more than conduce to the self-complacency of the hearer, was regarded in many quarters as a species of ignorant and fanatical rhetoric. Many persons, more gifted than the Duchess of Buckingham, shared with her grace in the opinions she expressed to Lady Huntington concerning the teachings of Whitefield and his companions. "I think, your ladyship," she wrote, "their doctrines are most repulsive and strongly tinctured with impertinence and disrespect toward their superiors, in perpetually endeavoring to level all ranks and do away with all distinctions. It is monstrous to be told that you have a heart as sinful as the common wretches that crawl the earth. This is highly offensive and insulting, and I cannot but wonder that your ladyship should relish sentiments so much at variance with high rank and good breeding." Nevertheless, and notwithstanding adverse criticisms, the good work went on, of course with vary-

ing fortunes and with seasons of ebb and flow. But its effect on society became more and more manifest. It became the source and spring of social reforms; and writers of approved ability have declared that it averted from England the horrors of the French Revolution, as it accomplished by peaceable means what in France, not at the time sharing these spiritual experiences, could only be brought about by convulsion and violence.

Contemporaneous with the Wesleyan movement, the "Great Awakening," as it is called, began under Jonathan Edwards in New England. These simultaneous quickenings, occurring in various parts of the world, seem to bear evidence of a common origin in the Divine Spirit. They are heavenly fires kindled by the same gracious hand on widely separated mountain peaks, having no direct, visible connection with each other. Thus when the flame began to shed its light on the mother-land it flashed out over the colonies as well.

The human means employed in the New World seems to have been a series of sermons on the fundamental doctrines of grace, from which we may again learn that, whether these doctrines as then preached are longer credible to reason, there must be something more and something deeper than the inculcation of moral precepts to effect any marked transformation in the spiritual life. In his "Narrative of Surprising Conversions," Edwards thus writes of this work of God:

> As it was carried on and the number of new saints multiplied, it soon made a glorious alteration in the town, so that in the spring and summer, A. D. 1735, the town seemed to be full of the presence of God. It was never so full of love, nor so full of joy, and yet so full of distress as then. There were remarkable tokens

of God's presence in almost every house. It was a time of joy in families on the account of salvation being brought to them; parents rejoicing over their children as being new-born, and husbands over their wives, and wives over their husbands.

Nor were these blessed experiences confined to Northampton, for they were participated in by many communities of the New World. The wave of religious power swept over the Connecticut Valley, beat on the shores of New Jersey, and was felt in far-away Virginia.

Alas! this season of refreshing was followed by decline, apathy, and unbelief, which even the apostolic labors of Whitefield, ending in Newburyport, September 30, 1770, could not arrest. The relapse was painful and appalling. But the revival spirit was not dead. It reasserted its power in England, principally through the philanthropic labors of William Wilberforce, who discerned the vital connection between evangelistic feeling and social regeneration; and it reappeared in this land with the beginnings of the American Republic, and breathed anew on the people the life from God, without which liberty has never endured and flourished. And with the renewal of its victories, the old century ended and the new commenced. As it were, just as the inauguration of Christianity itself was distinguished by the baptism of the Spirit, another Pentecost with its refreshing showers was vouchsafed to the infant republic as a preparation for its experiment in the art of self-government. Revivals were enjoyed from 1796, and through the ever-memorable year 1800, in Kentucky, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and elsewhere, and were frequent in all parts of the country during the first two decades of the present century.

That these special seasons of grace were of inestimable value to the nation ought to be candidly admitted, even though we censure the peculiar nervous manifestations which at times and in certain localities compromised to some extent their genuine character. But we should be considerate in our judgment. Much may be said in extenuation of these damaging frenzies. The people among whom they usually occurred were generally poor and illiterate, and had been for years accustomed to the monotonous life of the wilderness or of sparsely settled communities. What more natural, then, than for them to be excited by the extraordinary conditions under which they were brought by the intense fervor of the aroused evangelists, and having no command of language wherewith to express their overwhelming emotions, to manifest the inner turmoil by hysterical twitchings, jerkings, and swooning? Such phenomena we are bound to deplore; but the question may well be brought home to those critics who are disposed to magnify them out of all proportion, whether these incidental physical excesses were not as the mere automatic action of the eyelids in comparison with the more appalling moral and spiritual blindness of the age? Was it not infinitely better to incur the possibility of such momentary exhibitions of nervousness than to have continued permanently in the blank, heartless atheism which was blighting and blasting every human hope? Better that people should lose their wits for a season than that they should lose their souls. The choice seems to have been between the revolutionary methods of the French and the revival methods of the Saxon, and a dispassionate view of the extremes in-

volved in each, and of the results attained by either, must always lead to the conclusion that the advantages were immeasurably with the latter.[1]

But the twilight of the two centuries was not only distinguished by religious elevation, it was likewise remarkable for its intellectual resuscitation. Prof. Otto Pfleiderer, however, recognizes no intimate relation between the two movements. He believes that the "evangelical" party was so much cut off from any living connection with the thought of the age that its influence on its quickening must have been exceedingly slight. "The ultimate and profoundest source of this mental revolution," he argues, "which at the beginning of this century spread through all cultured nations, must be sought in the nature of man. After the cold understanding had in the eighteenth century exercised despotic sway, starving the emotions and fettering the phantasy, these wronged sides of our nature once more claimed their rights and rebelled against the despotism of the understanding." "'A return to nature and to natural emotions' was now everywhere the watchword, and Rousseau became the prophet of the new age. The cry found its echo in the 'storm and stress' spirit of *belles-lettres:* Herder and Goethe were its heralds in Germany, Wordsworth and Shelley in English poetry." "From the 'Gospel of Nature' of Rousseau sprang the philosophical idealism of Kant and of Fichte, and the

[1] On this section, see Goldwin Smith's "Oxford," p. 39; Dorner, "History Protestant Theology," Vol. II., pp. 92, 246; Hagenbach, "History of the Church in the Nineteenth Century," Vol. I., Chap. XVIII.; Lecky, "England in the Eighteenth Century," Vol. II., Chap. IX.

religious pantheism of Herder and Novalis."[1] But our author might have called attention to the fact, which would have strengthened his position, that the intellectual awakening in France, symbolized by such names as Buffon, Diderot, D'Alembert, Duclos, Condillac, Helvetius, Rynal, Condorcet, Mably, and Voltaire, was decidedly anti-Christian, acknowledged no indebtedness to religion, and tended toward the apotheosis of nature; for whether materialistic or idealistic, the end apparently was the same—to exalt nature to the supreme seat of authority *within* man as well as over man.

While I have no doubt that this awakening was in the main due to causes lying outside the domain of organized Christianity, it is hardly fair to exclude altogether the revival spirit from its origins. An accomplished writer in the London "Spectator," July 15, 1899, insists that:

> Wesley and his co-workers produced not only a great moral, but also a great intellectual change in England. We doubt if what the Germans call the *Weltanschauung* of a nation was ever so rapidly transformed as was that of England in the last century. Think of the change from the aridity of the deistic controversy and the hollow brilliancy of Bolingbroke and Chesterfield, to the green pastures and still waters of the "Lyrical Ballads," and ask yourself what could have wrought such a marvelous resurrection from the dead. We cannot, perhaps, explain this, for the spirit, in the last analysis, moveth where it listeth; but we do see that the new literature and thought sprang from a new soil watered by a new faith which once more saw the world to be divine and men to be vitally related in social bonds forged by God himself.

Of this, we have evidence in the tone and quality of what may be termed distinctively the evangelical litera-

[1] Pfleiderer, "Development of Theology," p. 304.

ture of the period, such as the graceful and tender poems of Cowper, the gloomy verse of Young, the "Fool of Quality" of Henry Brooke, and in the writings of Hervey, Hannah More, Newton, Romaine, Scott, Venn, not forgetting the hymns of the Wesleys, of Newton, Beveridge, Shirley, Rowland Hill, and Toplady. But beyond this circle, there appears a higher order of genius whose works witness to the influence of the new religious life of the land, even though they may have been in some measure affected by foreign authors.

Wordsworth imparted to religion as well as to nature a deeper significance. The "Solitary among the Mountains" is as much of a prophet-teacher as a minstrel; and in his verse he reveals the hold that faith has on humanity when uncontaminated by conceit and artificiality. It is true that Thomas Carlyle gives a discouraging account of things in Scotland, telling us how little spiritual food could be found in the university. "There was much talk about progress of the species, dark ages, and the like, but the hungry young looked up to their spiritual nurses, and for food were bidden to eat the east wind." "Dr. Thomas Brown, eloquent and full of enthusiasm about simple suggestion, relative, etc., was found utterly unprofitable." And yet at this time Coleridge was reviving the Alexandrian school of philosophy, and was setting forth revolutionary theological opinions in the church, whose influence would be felt in biblical criticism and biblical interpretation for many years after. And even then Burns had sung his songs of love and nature, through which, ever and anon, the old Scotch notes of piety resound, and had announced in almost martial strains man's true dignity to be in

himself and not in his tinsel ornaments. Sir Walter Scott had also appeared, beginning his poetical career in 1805, and speedily electrifying society by the phenomenal brilliancy of his genius for romance. Nor should we forget that the first number of the "Edinburgh Review" was published in 1802, and that within a few years George Combe, with his new philosophy of life, and Thomas Erskine, Macleod Campbell, and Edward Irving were startling their contemporaries and were sowing seeds of thought whose fruit was destined to be transformed into new opinions, but not entirely to perish.

Now, admitting the manifest revolt in some of these great teachers from dominant orthodoxy, it cannot be denied that they seem to be seeking truth in such a way as must always suggest their indebtedness to the religious spirit. Consequently, without claiming everything for the evangelical revival, we believe we are warranted in affirming that the quickened soul of the world was a most potent force in arousing its slumbering intellect.

And certainly, in America we had no native literature worth the name until after the Revolutionary War and the gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit which crowned it with blessing and glory. "Our intellectual patriarchs" belong, without exception, to the generation which followed the Revolution. "Irving was not a year old when peace was declared. Cooper was born in the same year that Washington went into office; Halleck, one year later; Prescott, in the year Washington came out of office. The Constitution was five years old when Bryant was born. The first year of the

present century witnessed the birth of Bancroft, and, before another decade has gone, Emerson was born, and Willis, and Longfellow, and Whittier, and Holmes, and Hawthorne, and Poe." [1] But MacMaster, in his explanation of this extraordinary birth of genius, is likewise inclined to be partial and exclusive. He likens it to the literary eras of "the age of Pericles, of Augustus, of Leo, of Elizabeth, and of Louis Quatorze," and contends that the brilliancy of these periods followed seasons of national commotion, disorder, and contention. And his elucidation of the phenomenon is contained in a single sentence: "Whatever can turn the minds of men from the channels in which they have long been running, and stir them to their inmost depths, has never yet failed to produce most salutary and lasting results." [2] This may be admitted without controversy. But what so rouses man, thrills him, startles and agitates and stimulates his every faculty, as the power of religion? Goethe regards the ages of faith as the ages of the greatest intellectual activity. And we are, therefore, obliged to conclude that while the revolutionary movement had much to do with the quickening of national thought and with the production of our early literature, the revival of religion was also a potent agent, stirring the soul to its deepest depths. If the one was the father, the other was the mother, and without the union of both, there would have been no birth of resplendent literary genius.

There is another characteristic feature of the two twilights that remains to be considered—the political. The convulsions and upheavals in civil governments

[1] MacMaster, "Hist. People of U. S.," Vol. II., p. 77. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 77.

were as remarkable in their way as were those which brought to an end the lethargy of the mind and the apathy of the heart, and gave to the world a new era in letters and faith. The War of Independence had wrought momentous changes, not only to the colonists, but to Englishmen everywhere. It had compelled a recognition of the rights of British subjects under Magna Charta and the Constitution, and it had effected permanently a restriction of the royal prerogative in the affairs of the people. But in addition to this, it had aroused everywhere a longing for freedom, a longing that found its earliest expression in France, and which was destined to continue its agitations throughout the century, notably in 1838, in 1848, in 1860, in 1870, and which would have kindled its fires more promptly all over Europe but for the excesses of the Reign of Terror. The entire continent needed the revolutionary cataclysm almost as fully as France ; but certain causes precipitated it there and hindered it elsewhere. France then became the storm-center of liberty ; and terrible and destructive though the tempest was, it was indispensable to the progress of humanity and the rise of the new civilization. The rotten and rotting forests had to be cleared away, the poison growth of gleaming flowers had to be rooted up, the malaria of social swamps had to be dispersed, and the treacherous vipers and gnawing vermin that rendered unhabitable the social State had to be exterminated before there could be any garden of the Lord, and before the people could rear the sanctuary dedicated to universal freedom and happiness. The French Revolution was an object-lesson. It warned rulers not to go too far ; it demonstrated that there will always be

violent reaction against persistent injustice; and it revealed to the people the danger to which they were exposed by the intensity of their indignation, and admonished them not to substitute wild fury for justice, lest, like Samson, they pull down the house about them, and retard the final victory of the cause they have at heart as did the terrorists in 1793.

The French Revolution was likewise the termination of an epoch. It was a day of doom, a time of judgment. In its turn it anathematized a church that had long cursed the nation, that had corrupted conscience, polluted purity and enslaved thought; it suppressed a throne that had oppressed those whom it should have protected, that had existed for its own splendor and not for its own honor, and that had increased its luxury at the expense of the impoverished; and it repudiated and guillotined the upper classes, who by their laxity, their immoralities, their cruelties, and their glittering and sickening depravities, had sunk themselves lower than the lowest; for none are so fallen as the angels, creatures of most exalted privilege, who kept not their first estate. What Camille Desmoulins in his wild exultation, wrote immediately on the fall of the Bastille, may be taken as fairly indicative of the kind of world the convulsive throes of this political earthquake precipitated into the bottomless abyss.

"*Hæc nox est*," he triumphantly exclaims. "This night we have escaped from our miserable Egyptian bondage. This night has exterminated the wild boars, the rabbits, and all the vermin which devour our crops. This night has abolished the tithes and perquisites of the clergy. This night has abolished the annates and dispensations; has taken the keys of heaven from an Alex-

ander VI. and given them to a good conscience. O night, disastrous to the great chamber, the registrars, the bailiffs, the attorneys, the secretaries, the solicitous beauties, porters, valets, advocates, people of the royal household, all the tribes of rapine! Night, disastrous to all the bloodsuckers of the State, the financiers, the courtiers, the cardinals, archbishops, abbés, canonesses, abbesses, priors, and subpriors!"

Yes, night indeed, black and profound, swallowing up the enormities, atrocities, infamies, as well as the puerilities and artificialities of a day which, measured by the tears of the innocent and the sufferings of the just, had already reached the duration of an eternity.

The Revolution, in one sense, had its rise in the degradation and unmatched wretchedness of the masses. These are graphically portrayed by Carlyle:

They—the peasant class and lowly—are sent to do statute labour, to pay statute taxes, to fatten battlefields—named "beds of honor"—with their bodies, in quarrels which are not theirs; their hand and toil is in every possession of man, but for themselves they have little or no possession; untaught, uncomforted, unfed, to pine stagnant in thick obscuration, in squalid destitution, and obstruction, this is the lot of the millions, *peuple taillable et corvéable à merci et miséricorde.*"[1]

And when this heap of seething wretchedness was becoming vocal, and with strident cries was clamoring for bread, and the thunders of contending factions echoed over Europe, Schleiermacher, discerning the true significance of the hour, wrote his famous discourses on "Religion," in which he taught that Christianity was essentially social and the church the brotherhood of mankind. Unquestionably, stripped of its religious nomen-

[1] "French Revolution," Vol. I., p. 2.

clature, this is the message of the Revolution to the world. It was written clearly in the idyllic dreams of Rousseau, it was revealed in Condorcet's "Progress of the Spirit of Man," it was involved in the political schemes of the Rolands, and found, at last, the fullest expression in the system of Comte, where the individual is lost in the species and each man is merely a part of the collective Great Being existing solely for that Great Being, by the philosopher identified with the totality of humanity. Yes, the hope of a new order of society—

> In which liberty, equality, and fraternity should reign ; in which tyrants should no more oppress and judges no more frown down the poor ; in which hungry eyes and gaunt faces would no longer appeal to heaven in vain for bread ; in which jealousy, suspicion, and rivalry would be banished by the sentiment of brotherhood ; in which war should be impossible and crime unknown ; in which the good and beautiful gifts of God should be every man's possession by birthright and life should become gay and glad again, crowned with plenty and bright with song—these were the dreams with which men in the early days of the Revolution, before the tiger had tasted blood, kept their feasts of fraternity, clasping each others' necks in the streets of Paris and proclaiming a millennium of peace and joy.[1]

These visions were born, not of hell, but of heaven ; they were part of the neglected teachings of the Christian faith, and destined to exert an immediate and future influence on Christian history and development.

Such, then, was the twilight of the two centuries, and under its leaden and storm-streaked sky, but breathing the exhilarating atmosphere of a new age, Christianity gave signs of aggressive action. She began to reorganize herself. She commenced to learn how little in

[1] Baldwin Brown, "First Principles," p. 261.

reality she was dependent on earthly governments for her support and dignity. Clearer conceptions of her divine character and mission began to prevail. She became conscious of a fullness of life she had not realized before for many decades, and, sharing in the unrest, the agitation, the very uncertainty, and yet the expectancy of the times, she addressed herself to the problems of the future—problems that involved her own welfare as well as the destiny of mankind. Missions of various kinds, Bible societies, and evangelizing agencies were called in swift succession into existence, and it soon became apparent that Christianity was mobilizing her forces and that she was about to take the field as never in the past, not even in the apostolic age.

While as early as 1698 The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge was formed in England, and a few other enterprises of a kindred spirit, it was not until the close of the last century that these movements multiplied in a remarkable degree. King William III. was "graciously pleased" June 16th, 1701, to erect and settle a corporation with the name, The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts; and Frederick IV., of Denmark, 1705, sanctioned a similar scheme among his subjects; and in 1732 the Moravian Missions commenced. But these admirable combinations were only the advance guard of what was to follow. A Naval and Military Bible Society was founded in 1780; the Methodist missions were begun in 1784; the Sunday School Society, in 1785; the Baptist Missionary Society, in 1792; the London Missionary Society, in 1795; and then, before the century closed, the Scottish Missionary Society, and associations for the evangeliza-

tion of England (1796), for Baptist Home work (1797), and the Religious Tract Society (1799).

Still greater activity distinguished the dawning of the nineteenth century. In 1800 the Church Missionary Society was formed; in 1803 the Sunday School Union; in 1804 the British and Foreign Bible Society; in 1805 the British and Foreign School Society; and these were rapidly followed by societies for evangelizing Ireland (1806), for converting the Jews (1808), for distributing prayer-books (1812), for the triumph of Protestantism on the continent (1818), for the promotion of the religious principles of the Reformation (1828), and others for the advancement along particular lines of the holy gospel in faith and practice throughout the globe. The same tendency was manifest in America apparently as the result of the religious quickening and the political upheaval. Under the haystacks on the borders of the Hoosac, some students of Williams College, Wills, Hall, and Richards, converted in the revivals of 1800, "prayed into existence the embryo of foreign missions." In February, 1812, the first American missionaries to heathen lands, Rice, Judson, Newell, Nott, and Hall, with their wives, set out for Calcutta. This year witnessed the organization of the American Board of Foreign Missions, and in 1814 the General Missionary Convention of the Baptists came into operation. The Baptist Home Mission Society hardly belongs to this period, as it was not founded until 1832; but in 1819 the Episcopalians of this country sent forces to help on the good work in foreign lands; and in 1826 the American Home Missionary Society was formed; in 1825 the Tract Society; in 1815 the American Education Society; in 1824

the American Baptist Publication Society and the Sunday School Union; in 1826 the American Seaman's Friend Society; in 1817 the Colonization Society, contemplating the settlement of Liberia; and in 1826 the Temperance Society. These, numerous though they are, do not exhaust the list of corporate bodies summoned into being by the spirit of the age to promote the eternal principles of Christ's kingdom.

Nor should we overlook the fact that among them appeared one of the greatest significance in American history—the first society for the abolition of slavery, formed among the Friends in Pennsylvania in 1774. But while to them pertains the honor of priority, to the Methodists belongs the distinction of having organized the strongest and greatest of such societies; and in their Conference, this denomination, in 1780, publicly declared that "slavery is contrary to the laws of God and man and nature, and hurtful to society; contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and doing that which we would not that others should do to us and ours." A noble protest, this, and one in which they were joined by the Baptists of Virginia, who, in 1789, "Resolved, That slavery is a violent deprivation of the rights of nature and inconsistent with a republican government, and we therefore recommend it to our brethren to make use of every legal means to extirpate this horrid evil from the land."

Now, taking all these enterprises together, these new orders and institutions, does it not seem as though Christianity, with the fading of the old century and the beginning of the new, was preparing herself for an onward movement; was anticipating, as with prophetic

foresight, the needs and developments of the coming hundred years; and was proclaiming a revolutionary programme of her own, instinct with the hope of brotherhood and the victory of faith? This is the impression her extraordinary activity is calculated to make, and as we proceed we shall meet with abundant evidence that it has been justified by the facts of history.

But, more than this, it would seem that, when the two twilights were blending, there were not lacking signs that Christianity, in the future, would have to depend on her own resources for the success of her projected undertakings and come to rely less and less on the support of the State and the official patronage of princes. In the United States, the old-time partnership, such as it was, between the civil government and the church, practically came to an end with the Revolution. While in certain commonwealths, like Massachusetts, there were many conservatives who were reluctant to abandon the union of the secular and spiritual, they were unable to resist the more general and persistent demand for its abrogation. Let it, however, be understood that these demands did not proceed primarily and necessarily from those who were disaffected toward religion, but principally from Christians themselves, particularly from Quakers and Baptists, who had always taught that the religion of Christ ought to maintain itself and pursue its work without entering into entangling alliances with the sovereignties of this world.

In France, the same, or, more accurately speaking, a similar disruption occurred during the throes and agonies of the revolutionary period. The Convention abolished tithes, acting on a vague impression that religion should

be supported in some other way. Then the landed estates of the church were confiscated to relieve the financial distress of the nation. But the climax was reached when the Bishop of Paris publicly renounced Christianity in the Convention, November, 1793. Chaumette, so strangely extolled by Michelet, the product of "the holy mud of Paris," illustrates the significance of this crisis in his speech wherein he declared that the priests were capable of all crimes, and that Paris had decided to acknowledge no other worship than that of reason. This declamation led to a series of resolutions, the first of which is sufficient to tell the whole story: "All the churches or temples of all religions and worships which have existed in Paris shall be immediately closed." Excesses of various kinds ensued. Churches were desecrated and plundered; the Goddess of Reason was installed at Notre Dame, and the tenth day of rest was substituted for the seventh; while it was being openly asserted that the Parisians were without faith and had exalted Marat to the throne of Jesus. Danton perceived that these scenes of abjuration were ominous, and pronounced this remarkable sentence: "If we have not honored the priest of error and fanaticism, neither will we honor the priest of infidelity." Even Robespierre, in his manifesto to Europe, seeks to abate the odium which had attached to the authorities for their atheistic decrees, by declaring that, "The French people and its representatives respect the liberty of all worships, and proscribe none of them." To some such solution of the problem, the Convention laboriously struggled, as is shown by the singularly pitiable decree: "The Convention invites all good citizens, in the name

of the police, to abstain from all disputes on theology, or such as are foreign to the great interests of the French people." But, conceding that the debates had gradually drifted toward a recognition of every man's right to worship God, unhampered by the State, it is none the less clear that the State had repudiated official connection with the Catholic Church. Thus, for a little while, the same result was reached which had been reached in America, although the means employed, the reasons alleged, and the spirit manifested, were very different.

The French were not in a condition to give this experiment a fair trial. They had for centuries identified religion with ecclesiasticism, and they missed its outward signs and public ministrations. Therefore, in 1797, steps were taken to restore Catholic worship; but as all the measures proposed were not acceptable to Pius VI., a conflict ensued which threatened disastrous consequences. The Directory imprisoned the pope and endorsed Napoleon's proposal that no other pope should be chosen. By and by, however, the emperor took a different view of the matter, and a *concordat* was entered into between France and Rome; but by this *concordat* the church was not by any means restored to her former position, nor was it until the negotiations between Pius VII. and Louis XVIII. that his holiness was invested with the same exalted privileges which his predecessor had enjoyed in the reign of Francis I.; and even then the church was not reinstated in all the fearful absolutism which had excited the abhorrence of enlightened minds before the revolutionary struggle. The Reformed Church was also taken under the protection

of the State; but though the experiment in freedom was too hastily abandoned, it had produced a party in France—a party, intelligent and influential, which has kept a watchful eye on the actions of the church, and which has more than once manifested a determination to bring about a final separation between her and the nation. Nor should it be forgotten that, as though designed to consummate this separation everywhere in the fullness of time, attacks were made on medieval popery by various European governments.

In Tuscany, Leopold instigated a reformation in imitation of Henry VIII., bringing spiritual courts under control of the government and suppressing the Inquisition. The Austrian Emperor, Joseph II., laid restrictions on Roman bulls, abolished mendicant monks, confiscated monasteries for colleges and barracks, ordered the vernacular to be used for all services except the mass, and accorded toleration to Protestants and Greeks. Spain also displayed unexpected energy in the same direction. She condemned the Inquisition and moderated a number of abuses. And Venice herself entered into the conflict and became a very center of revolt against antiquated ecclesiastical assumptions and tyrannies.

This daring uprising of the secular, this presumptuous interference with the long-established prerogatives of the sacred orders, was destined to produce a spirit of resistance and of indignation in the church—a spirit which should reveal itself later on in Oxford movements and in other movements, chafing under the yoke of privy councils or of Italian cabinets, and claiming for Christianity a sovereignty above that of earthly thrones and governments; all of which, as the philosophic

student must realize, has made, on the side of Christianity, for the final triumph of disestablishment, she being compelled, by the encroachments of her former allies, to demand release from what is coming to be an intolerable humiliation. This consummation, the origins of which date back to the twilight of two centuries, is inevitable and will reach its final stage through the action of religious leaders and their followers.[1]

In the meanwhile, as Christianity realized that her support from the revenues of States would probably be more or less precarious, and in some instances would cease entirely, she began, with the dawning of the present century, to develop and rely on her own resources. While in the past she had been sustained by some form of national tithing and had been enriched by the votive offerings of princes and princely merchants, and by the prices she had charged for the performance of various sacred offices, she commenced to appeal to her own constituency, poor as well as affluent, for voluntary offerings. In America, the great Protestant bodies had to provide means for the building of churches, schools, and other benefactions, as well as to defray current expenses of worship; and when it is remembered that these institutions have been established, with only a few exceptions, within the last hundred years, the amount of money freely contributed is more than encouraging, and is indicative of what can be achieved in the future. The Catholics, also, in the United States, have fairly rivaled if they have not excelled the Protes-

[1] Carnot, "*Mémoires sur Carnot*," Vol. II.; Michelet, "History of the Revolution," Vol. VII.; De Pressensé, "The Church and the French Revolution."

tants in their lavish expenditures and in the numbers of all classes who have gladly shared in furnishing the necessary supplies. In Great Britain, the Nonconformists, by their generous gifts, challenge the world's admiration, and even on the continent, there has been for some time more dependence placed on the voluntary offerings of the faithful than formerly. If it shall be said that, in the earlier ages, the religion of the people cost the people as much as now, we may be allowed, in reply, to answer that then money was, as a rule, paid as a tax, and was generally regarded as an exacting imposition from which there was no relief.

But the movement I am describing refers to the development of genuine benevolence, to the growth of a liberal spirit that gives to the support of Christianity and does not pay for its ministrations. There is considerable difference between these methods of raising money. While they may furnish equal totals, the latter exalts and blesses the donor. The voluntary system cultivates the spirit of benevolence, and adds the consciousness to every contributor, however lowly, that he has as real a part to play in the advancement of Christianity as the highest and noblest in the land. With the beginning of the nineteenth century, the work of cultivating the generosity of the churches and of perfecting systems of sacred finance was a necessity. It could not be avoided. Therefore in contemplating Christianity, as the old century was retreating before the new, we must think of her, not only as feeling deeply the power of a new life and as planning for an onward movement, but as realizing in some degree her independence and the obligation resting on her to draw

from her own membership the money necessary for the successful prosecution of her designs.

Such, then, was her condition when the century was young. Whether she has fulfilled the promise of the dawning, and whether she has interpreted her age aright and has met its reasonable demands, are questions we must for the present leave unanswered. But no one can surely doubt the magnificence of the opportunity that opened before her with the beginning of the last hundred years, nor underestimate the difficulties of the varied and gigantic task to which she was then called. How she has wrought, what she has sacrificed, and what she has achieved, make up a story of transcendent interest, and one more romantic than any dreamed of by the fertile imagination of a Victor Hugo or an Alexander Dumas. The wonder of it and the glory of it should inspire us with fervent admiration of the epoch which has rendered it possible, and should fill us with something of the holy spirit of gratitude, of devotion, of enthusiasm, and of earnest inquiry which prepares for nobler deeds in coming years, and which has found no more eloquent expression, and possibly never can, than in the words of Archbishop Ireland:

> I love my age. I love its aspiration and its resolves. I revel in its feats of valor, its industries, and its discoveries. I thank it for its many benefactions to my fellow-men, to the people rather than the princes and rulers. I seek no backward voyage across the sea of time. I will ever press forward. I believe that God intends the present to be better than the past, and the future to be better. We should live in our age, know it, be in touch with it. Our work is in the present and not in the past. It will not do to understand the thirteenth better than the nineteenth century.[1]

[1] Sermon before the Baltimore Council.

II

THE DIVINE AND HUMAN

Through the harsh noises of our day,
A low, sweet prelude finds its way ;
Through clouds of doubt, and creeds of fear,
A light is breaking, calm and clear.

That song of Love, now low and far,
Ere long shall swell from star to star !
That light, the breaking day, which tips
The golden-spired Apocalypse !

—*Whittier.*

II

THE HUMAN ELEMENT IN THE PROGRESS OF A DIVINE RELIGION

With Schelling, religion is pre-eminently intuition; with Jacobi, it is faith; with Hegel, it is thought; with Schleiermacher, it is dependence; with Herbert Spencer, it is wonder; with Kant, it is duty; and, older than they all, with Lactantius, it is "the link which unites man with God." Dr. Martineau understands by religion, "belief in an Ever-living God, that is, of a Divine Will ruling the universe, and holding moral relations with mankind." Principal Fairbairn says that "it is but the symbol of the kindred natures and correlated energies of God and man"; or, in other terms: "Religion may be described as man's consciousness of supernatural relations, or his belief in the reciprocal activities of his own spirit and the Divine." And Dr. W. N. Clarke, in harmony with this definition, writes: "Religion is the life of man in his superhuman relations; that is, in his relation to the Power that produced him, the Authority that is over him, and the Unseen Being with whom he is capable of communion."

In these representations, it is not for a second conceded, with the Latin poet, that "fear genders the gods"; neither is the singular misconception of Brunetière and of Bossuet for a moment tolerated, that religion in its highest form is a perfect system and model of government. We are all more or less familiar with the

efforts that have been made to identify it with phantasy and superstition, or with outward order and discipline, or, at most, with certain definite and stereotyped creeds. Not infrequently has it been said that the priest invented religion, though, as Sabatier naïvely puts it, no one deigns to inform us who invented the priest; and, as frequently, it has been narrowed and restricted by the limitations of verbal forms or of ecclesiastical systems.

But the more the subject is studied dispassionately and candidly, the clearer it is seen that all such meagre conceptions must be abandoned as untenable, and that, in the last analysis, religion must be taken as the science of man's higher and most enduring relationships. And the genius of Christianity is in perfect accord with this philosophical deduction. We are warranted in assuming that, if Christianity is the supreme religion of the world, it will and must embody in itself the essential nature of religion itself; for it to do otherwise would be for it to present a contradiction and to render its own claims incredible and self-destructive.

Auguste Sabatier, dealing with the question why the followers of Jesus regard their faith as ideal and perfect, answers in the following language:

> They affirm that, religion not being an idea but a relation to God, the perfect religion is the perfect realization of their relation to God and of God's relation to them. And this is not on their part a theoretical speculation; it is the immediate and practical result of their inward experience. They feel that their religious need is satisfied, that God has entered with them, and they with him, into a relation so intimate and so happy that, in the matter of practical religion, not only can they imagine nothing, but that they can desire nothing above it or beyond.

But how is this union effected? "The orphaned human soul and the distant unknown God are reunited and embraced in filial love, to be no more divided and estranged," and that too, through the ministry of Jesus Christ. "Hence," he continues, "Christianity is not only the ideal, but an historical religion, inseparably connected not only with the maxims of morality and with the doctrines of Jesus, but with his person itself, and with the permanent action of the new spirit which animated him, and which lives from generation to generation in his disciples." It is, therefore, supremely the revelation and restoration of the "relationship" which has been made actual between God and man through the personal mediation of Jesus Christ. It is not merely, as Mill affirmed of religion in general, "the strong and earnest direction of the emotions and desires toward an ideal object." While it includes this, it also embraces affiance with and devotion to that object through redemption in our blessed Lord. Consequently, Herder must be considered as keeping within the limits of prose when he declared that "Christ must be viewed as the first living fountain of the world's purification, freedom, and happiness. There must be no such qualification as, *as it were*, or, *it was only on this wise*, but the fact must be embraced in its most active character."

Such, then, in its essence and in its fundamental and universal character, and quite apart from doctrinal formulas and external institutions, is the Christian religion; and out of it and for it grows the church, the organism or series of organisms in which it realizes itself and fulfills itself and by which it becomes operative in the world's history. Of this great administrative force,

Lord Bacon and Archbishop Secker write in terms that bring into relief its comprehensiveness and its spiritual majesty. The former of these two eminent men has bequeathed to posterity this definition:

> There is a universal catholic church of God, dispersed over the face of the earth, which is Christ's spouse and Christ's body; being gathered of the fathers of the old world, of the church of the Jews, of the spirits of the faithful dissolved, and the spirits of the faithful militant, and of the names yet to be born, which are already written in the book of life.

And the prelate writes:

> The catholic church is the universal church spread through the world; and the catholic faith is the universal faith, that form of doctrine which the apostles delivered to the whole church, and it received. What that faith was, we may learn from their writings, contained in the New Testament; and, at so great a distance of time, we can learn it with certainty nowhere else. Every church or society of Christians that preserves this catholic or universal faith, accompanied with true charity, is a part of the catholic or universal church. And in this sense, churches that differ widely in several notions and customs may, notwithstanding, each of them be truly catholic churches.

The clearest and most reverent thought of our own times accepts these definitions. Even now, more than when they were penned, it is perceived that it is not the size but the spirit of a communion which determines its right to the name catholic. Some of the smaller and feebler of the denominations may have more faith and charity than some of the larger ones; and it is possible for those among them that are greatest in extent to be more narrow, local, and provincial than the weakest.[1]

[1] On this section, see Martineau, "Study of Religion," Vol. I., p. 1; Clarke, "Outlines Christian Theology," p. 1; Fairbairn, "Christ in Mod-

By the very terms in which the idea of religion, especially of Christianity, is expressed, its divine origin is implied. The experience of the devout tallies with the reasoning of the theologian, that the kind of piety which renovates, enlightens, and exalts the inner life is not self-begotten, but must be traced, even beyond human instrumentalities, to a heavenly source; and remounting by the chain of successive experiences to the beginning, an inaugural experience is reached and the deduction logically established that the entire series proceeded from the Infinite. We may differ in our philosophy of means employed and of methods adopted, and may reject or accept miracles as the necessary accompaniments of a supernatural revelation given; but if we think of religion in any true sense of that word, we can hardly avoid the direct recognition of God as its author. The existence of the one carries with it the reality of the other; and, therefore, I desire it to be understood that whatever I may say relative to the human element in religion, I have no intention of denying or obscuring the divine. To me, it is self-evident that God must be the supreme factor, not only in its inception, but in its development and victories. If Christianity is not the expression of his thought and of his Spirit, and if, throughout its progress, he has not been present and operative, then it is a mere earthly invention, and is destitute of authority over either the intellect or conscience.

Mr. Bailey Saunders inquires: "Why may we not maintain that religion and morality grow, after the same

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ern Theology," p. 493; Sabatier, "Philosophy of Religion," pp. 108, 139; Mill, "Utility of Religion"; Herder, "*Erläuterungen*," p. 66; Secker, "Church Catechism."

fashion as art and science, by the intuitions of genius, which, although sometimes pronounced to be supernatural, is the flower of our common humanity?"[1] The answer is simple and explicit. Religion belongs to a different class. It is not in the same category with art or science. In itself, as we have seen, it is a revelation and perfection of relations between the creature and the Creator; and if the Creator takes no part in them, then they are not realized at all; and if he does, then his action is in accord with his own nature, and therefore is not human but superhuman. But while this position is fundamental to any adequate philosophy of religion, it is not to be so construed as to exclude the agency and co-operation of man from its beginnings or from the successive steps of its progress.

Singular to record, and yet, nevertheless, true, there has seemingly been as much reluctance on the part of some people to recognize the human element in religion, particularly in Christianity, as there has been on the part of others to find a place for the divine. Between the extremes of supernaturalism and rationalism, both man and God have been deprived of any part in what concerns them most, and which, without either, has only a fictitious existence. Efforts to controvert this strange prejudice have not always been successful. A fear exists in not a few quarters, even to-day, that too much may be conceded to the creature. There is a suspicion that there is a plot afoot to rob Jehovah of his glory. It has seemed to some minds that man ought only and can only be saved as an automaton; to others, it has seemed almost impossible to have an

[1] Saunders, "Quest of Faith," p. 190.

inspired Bible, unless in the communication of its contents the action of the intellect be superseded and the very movements of the recording pen be mechanically controlled; and to yet others, it has appeared revolutionary, not to say profane, for any one to challenge traditional views or to depart from prevalent usages and customs, which, because of their venerable age, have come to be regarded as sacred. In various congregations, therefore, things are stationary; an air of hesitancy prevails, and ministers and members hardly know how far they may venture from ancient ways and to what extent they may attempt new things without incurring the wrath of an offended Deity, or what, perhaps, may be more inconvenient, the anger of their clerical seniors and more infallible lay associates. Not a little of this extraordinary aversion has been overcome during the nineteenth century, and there is, on the whole, a more candid recognition of the human element. Indeed, had it been otherwise, many of the remarkable movements of the century would never have been undertaken. But while this is true, and while what has been accomplished in this direction within the last hundred years is entitled to consideration, much yet remains to be done before the popular mind will accord to the human its real place in religion. And that this place be clearly perceived is so necessary to an intelligent comprehension of what has been wrought in the past, and to the progress of religion in the future, that we may well devote some thought to its exposition.

Herder was one of the earliest writers who realized deeply the importance of this subject. His views are thus summarized by Hagenbach :

He achieved a real reconciliation, inasmuch as he would grant that there was nothing perfect and ready in man which had not come by instruction, history, divine communication, and revelation. But he believed, further, that man could receive and assimilate nothing from without unless there was in him a kindred power by which to recognize what was suited to him, receive it, work it into his being, give an exterior development, and advance it to the best of his ability. Thus, for example, in his prize essay on the "Origin of Language," he attacked the apparently devout but mechanical view, that man received language alone from without and by divine communication. He held that its origin could only be divine in so far as it was human. But with Herder, the divine and human did not constitute an antagonism. . . . He would see the divine reconciled with the human, and the human illuminated and dignified by the divine.[1]

That no such antagonism exists, and that this coordination, however explained, of the finite and infinite, is as manifest in religion as in the origin of language, is proven at every stage of its history. Man, from the beginning, is the medium and instrument by which God discloses himself, and the message as transmitted always bears the mark of the individuality which received and published it, just as a river, by its color, temperature, and the drift upon its bosom, tells the story of the country through which it has passed. And as the earthly elements which mingle with its waters at its mouth do not discredit the geographical statement that its source is to be found high up among the hills, so the human traits and peculiarities which seem inseparable from every alleged divine revelation do not necessarily invalidate its claims to a heavenly origin.

The Old Testament is an example in point. Every-

[1] Hagenbach's "History of Church," Vol. II., p. 31.

where the divine word, formulated in speech, is always characterized by the limitations of language, by the narrowness and quality of existing knowledge, and by the traditions, customs, and habits of the period. He who studies the book carefully will find it almost impossible to escape the conclusion that, however divine is its content, it has been cast in a human mold. It was this conviction which led Luther to write in his "Letters on the Study of Theology":

> My dear friend, the best study of divinity is the study of the Bible, and the best reading of the Divine Book is human. The Bible must be read in a human way, for it was written by men for men. The more humanly we read God's word, the nearer do we approach the purpose of its Author, who created man in his own image, and deals toward us humanly in all those works and blessings where he manifests himself to us as God

And Hagenbach, in the same spirit, expresses himself in these terms:

> But even this [the Bible] has its human side, its scientific form, its literary expression, and its fixed circle of ideas. What seemed all-important at one time recedes at another; the expression that was true in connection with other tendencies is no more understood by another generation, which has grown up amid other circumstances.[1]

But what is everywhere apparent in the Old Testament is equally prominent in the New. Therein is enshrined the form of a man. He is its central glory. Of him it speaks; to him it bears testimony. And while he is unique and original, he is also typal and prophetical. He is called the Son of Man, a cos-

[1] "History of Church," Vol. II., p. 5.

mopolitan, universal title, lifting him out of exclusive kinship with a race, and making him representative of the entire human family. Had he appeared merely to display before our eyes an exceptional being, who is ever necessarily apart from mankind, he would simply have charmed us as a wonder, and would not have influenced us as an example and a brother. But he does not seem remote from us. He is the pattern of what is possible in ourselves, not merely in the way of conduct, but in the way of experience and of fellowship with the divine. Some of the poets have admirably voiced the yearning of the common heart for the disclosure of the Infinite in such tangible form as would render him real to faith. We all earnestly cry:

> For a God whose face
> Is humanized to lineaments of love;
> Not one who, when my hand would clasp his robe,
> Slips as a flash of light from world to world,
> And fades from form to form, then vanishes,
> Back to the formless sense within my soul,
> Which evermore pursues and loses him.

And this longing has been met in Christ. He relates himself to the Father as his embodiment and personification. Ye have seen me, ye have seen the Father also. "I and my Father are one." These are his solemn assurances, assurances which inspired Browning to pen the magnificent prophetic outburst:

> O Saul, it shall be
> A Face like my face that receives thee; a Man like to me,
> Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever; a Hand like this hand
> Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee!
> See the Christ stand!

But this indwelling of the Father in him is sign and proof that he will dwell in us, and evidence conclusive that religion consists in affiance and relationship between the divine and human, through whose joint action it takes its various forms and realizes itself in time. And in the annals of the apostolic era, we behold this human element operating with the greatest freedom, never apologizing for itself, but taking for granted its right to co-operate with God in developing the new faith. Gospels are penned, which disclose the idiosyncrasies of their authors; Epistles are written, in which may be observed similar differences in style, and in which the writers at times are careful to discriminate between what is specifically from God and what is their own thought or opinion, and what is of their own initiative and authority.

Morever, we have accounts of differences of view between the honored and equally inspired servants of Jesus Christ; and it is even recorded, after the manner of a modern dispute, "that Paul withstood Peter to his face, for he was wrong." Considerable liberty was evidently enjoyed in regard to worship and sacred observances. The disciples were only gradually weaned from Judaism. Our Saviour cast the gracious germs of truth into its soil, and it required a struggle to transplant them. At first they were unable to escape the peculiar influence of their original surroundings, and when they did they submitted to the imprint of their new environment. The apostles changed their method of succoring the poor; they added new officers to the church as they saw the necessities of the age demanded; and there is every reason to believe that they abandoned their original ex-

pectation of a speedy return of Christ to the world. They impress us as being anxious to shape an adequate "earthen vessel" for the heavenly treasure, as striving to give clearer and fuller statements of doctrine than were given at the first, and as seeking faithfully for the best methods and appliances by which the grace of Christ could be made operative in the world. Continually they manifest unwillingness for religion to be bound or fettered by temporary elements, and sweeping away all secondary complications, they unceasingly strive to impart to it the greatest independence and the purest and highest spirituality.

I have intimated that, on the close of the primitive age of Christianity, it was transplanted from Judaism and speedily gave evidence of its new associations and conditions. "Transplanted from the poor and arid soil of Hebraism into the rich and fruitful loam of Græco-Roman civilization, the Christian plant was sure to grow apace and be transformed." In this way does Sabatier allude to the phenomenon we are studying, and he continues: "Catholicism is as much Pagan as Apostolical Messianism was Jewish—from the same causes and according to the same law. More Greek in the East, more Roman in the West, it bears always and everywhere the traces of its origin." [1]

Traces of all the rich variety of ancient thought can readily be detected in the earliest and most permanent schools of theology. Neo-Platonism had to do with the doctrinal notions of Athanasius and Augustine. The latter evidently was governed in no small degree by Plato in his interpretation of St. Paul, and in some meas-

[1] Sabatier, "Phil. of Religion," p. 197.

ure, as we shall see hereafter, by the constitution of the empire itself. Synesius, also, in his teachings, constantly manifested his indebtedness to the same philosopher. And the same influence may be observed, centuries after, molding Scotus Erigena, Hugo of St. Victor, Aquinas, and Dante. Justin Martyr, Origen, and Clement revealed the effect of their previous studies when they came to deal with Christian themes, just as Tertullian in his theology betrayed at almost every point his juridical education and bias. The writings of the Fathers and the debates of councils when determining creed forms, cannot be read without recognizing in them something of the Stoical, Pythagorean, and Platonic systems, tempered and obscured by the allegorical mysticism of Alexandria, just as the scholasticism of the Middle Ages cannot be understood apart from Aristotle. He is uninstructed, or is singularly uncandid, who does not acknowledge that the oldest theologies of Christendom are Greek in their concepts and coloring, in what they say of substance and hypostasis, of essence and accident, of form and matter. Learned volumes have been published, setting forth at great length this connection between philosophy—the philosophy of the ancients—and the dogmatic teachings of the church in the third and fourth centuries; and occasionally their aim has been in this way to discredit Christianity itself. But there is no warrant in the admitted facts for challenging the divine origin and authority of our faith. These Fathers and Councils were striving to do what they had a perfect right to do; and in attempting to make clear and expound the sublime verities of religion, they could only call to their aid the modes of thought

and the speculations they had mastered. No other means were available to them. And if we to-day can make evident that they were faulty in their reasoning and conclusions, and correct their misconceptions, we shall only be doing what they did—defining and interpreting according to the light we have. They could not do otherwise, and we ought to do no less; and their action and our own alike go far toward demonstrating that the human element has an indispensable and important part to play in the progress of a divine religion.

When we consider the organization of Christianity into a hierarchy or a spiritual imperialism, the handicraft of the creature is again conspicuous. The constitution of the church becomes a counterpart of the Roman Empire: "The parish modeling itself on the municipality, the diocese on the province, the metropolitan regions on the great prefectures, and, at the top of the pyramid, the bishop of Rome, and the Papacy, whose ideal dream is simply, in the religious order, the universal and absolute monarchy of which the Cæsars had just set the pattern."[1] Augustus is changed into the Holy Father; and the pope, becoming Pontifex Maximus, inherits the authority of the imperators, who, from the Eternal City, ruled the civilized world. But there is no evidence that Jesus ever thought of creating any such society as this. Nowhere in the New Testament does anything like it appear. Where there is any allusion to a church at all, it is essentially irreconcilable with what is now understood by an episcopal body. "Further," as Principal Fairbairn testifies, "in the church of the New Testament the politico-monarchical

[1] Sabatier, "Philosophy of Religion," p. 198.

idea does not exist; there is no shadow, or anticipation, or prophecy of it. The churches are not organized, do not constitute a formal unity, have a fraternal but no corporate relation, have no common or even local hierarchy; they are divided by differences that preclude the very idea of an infallible head."[1] But, while this cannot be denied, and while the congregational principle is distinctly supreme in the New Testament, and while departure from it at the first was a serious error, we must not overlook the fact that the growth of episcopacy at the beginning was gradual and was designed to render more effective the work of the churches and to perfect their discipline. It was but another instance of the human asserting itself in the field of religion, undertaking what it felt itself bound to undertake, and, in doing so, falling into a mischievous blunder, which ended in fastening on the Christian world an ecclesiastical organization of the most masterful character.

And from those days to the days that now are, this assertion of the human has continued. It has displayed itself in reformations, in the preparation of creeds, in theological revisions, in modifications of church government, and in many other ways; and never has it been more persistent and active than in the nineteenth century. When its interference has been denounced, when its disclosure of itself has been condemned, and when every exhibition of itself has been deprecated, it has still continued to make itself seen and felt. My observation justifies me in adding that often the very men who have repudiated its ministry most vehemently, and who have most indignantly on their own account de-

[1] Fairbairn, "Catholicism," p. 177.

clined its assistance, have usually, perhaps unconsciously, done in some way themselves what they have condemned others for doing; like the evangelists who insist that the only thing necessary for their work to succeed is the divine blessing, while they are diligently employing very human measures; or like the interpreters who insist on verbal inspiration, and yet, with amiable inconsistency, adopt the method of allegorical exposition.

It would, then, seem to be impossible to exclude the human element from religion. Of a right and of necessity, it has a place there; and without it, we have no reason to suppose that religion could have been called into being; and without it, we have every reason for concluding that it could not progress. In nature, we have an analogy of its place and function. God has buried in the depths of the earth the gold, the coal, and the oil; but they are useless until man discovers them and brings them forth. He also gave to his creatures the wild flowers; and if these flowers are ever to be developed into greater beauty, it will be through human instrumentality. He furnishes the material, the basis, for new and more perfect growths; and if it is not profane and presumptuous for man to take in hand and work up into higher form what the Almighty has furnished in the physical world, why should similar interference in the spiritual be regarded with suspicion? Occasionally, we meet with those who delight to recall the memory of the wild flowers they were familiar with in youth; but this sentiment does not lead them to inveigh against "American Beauties," or the violets that have acquired a deeper tinge and sweeter fragrance through intelligent human care. Thus, in Christianity

we may have a tender recollection of old and crude interpretations; but it were hardly wise to carry our reverence so far as to antagonize the new light of the new age.

We should never forget that God has evidently related man to nature as he has, that, by his investigations and labors, he may become intellectually stronger and greater. Man was not made for nature, but nature was made for man. The same rule applies to religion. It must engage his attention, rouse his curiosity, impel his energy, constantly draw him out, keep him stirred up, seeking, improving, transforming. Christ said man is greater than the temple; also that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath; and, further even, religion, as far as it was in any real sense made, was made for man, not man for religion. A perfect religion is not so desirable or valuable as a religion that goes to make man perfect. Were it complete, with no reason for or possibility of amendment or change, it would possess no charm, it would rouse no latent powers. But, being, as it is, continually capable of enlargement and development, the human element necessarily has free scope, and its normal action lends itself to the discipline and development of character. How important, then, that it be so guided, enlightened, restrained, and yet inspired, that it may not transcend its legitimate bounds, and may fulfill its vocation in such a way as to promote and not retard, dwarf, or pervert the religion of Jesus Christ.

Lord Macaulay advanced the opinion that neither natural nor revealed theology could be progressive. He says:

All divine truth is, according to the doctrine of the Protestant churches, recorded in certain books. It is equally open to all who can read those books; nor can all the discoveries of all the philosophers in the world add a single verse to any of those books. It is plain, therefore, that in divinity there cannot be a progress analogous to that which is constantly taking place in pharmacy, geology, and navigation.[1]

Dr. Draper goes further than the essayist; for he affirms that a religion based on revelation "must repudiate all improvement in itself, and view with disdain that arising from the progressive intellectual development of man."[2] Obscurantist theologians have sided with these views, and have set forth the Confessions of the reformed churches or the Thirty-nine Articles as presenting a permanent systematization of inspired truth; but in my judgment, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Athanasius entertained a more philosophical and scriptural doctrine. They taught that God is always present, and continually reveals himself in nature and in the mind of man. Nor is it accurate to represent certain sacred books as claiming to contain all truth on the subject of religion. Our Lord told his disciples that there were other things he had not revealed, because they were not then able to receive them; but that when the Comforter was come, he would guide them into all truth. It is often hastily concluded that this promise was not designed to go beyond the apostles and their age; but such a limitation is purely arbitrary. Nowhere in the New Testament is it sustained. Rather do the Epistles warrant the expectation of continued and en-

[1] Essay on "History of Popes."

[2] "Conflict Between Religion and Science."

during illumination and guidance. To ignore these assurances, and to conclude that while we can go forward in lower things we cannot advance in the highest, is a mockery of the onward march of the race, and can only be accounted for on the supposition that both the nature of Christianity and the relation of the human element to its existence and well-being have been radically misconceived. Let me attempt to justify this statement; for, in so doing, we shall be able, in some measure, to vindicate the Faith and remove obstacles from the path of future progress.

Christianity is unquestionably a "book religion," and, as such, it must ever be the subject of interpretation. We are consequently commanded to "search the Scriptures"; but at the same time, we are admonished to remember that the letter killeth and that only the spirit giveth life. Likewise, it was explicitly declared by the Saviour that his words are spirit and life as well. We have here an important discrimination. The literal text is one thing, and a necessary thing; but after all, there is something higher than it—*the meaning*, which it can only adumbrate and never fully convey. For what words can explore and elucidate all that is comprehended in the soul's relationship to God? How can they, by any conceivable combinations, translate infinite attributes into compassable ideas? And how can they, being the crude images of man's own thought, and usually taken from the vocabularies of earthly interests, exhaustively represent the thought of the eternal and the absolute? At best, they are but coverings, like the outer envelopment of the seed, barely suggesting the form and glory of the germ within; or they are only as

the rough surface of the diamond, a sign and symbol of imprisoned light. If the light is to be released, there must be effort, search, and still from its very vastness there must ever be much remaining incomprehensible. And it stands to reason that the more knowledge man possesses of the universe in general, the more highly he has been trained to reflect and perceive, and the more fully he abandons himself to the influences of the Holy Spirit, the more enlightened and the more exalted will be his interpretations of God's truth, and very likely the less will they conform to accepted standards, which have usually been colored by the local exigencies which called them into being.

Of this principle, have we not an illustration in what St. Peter wrote of ancient prophecy? He says: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, *until the day dawn, and the daystar arise in your hearts.*"[1] The word of prophecy is not everything; the illumination is necessary, and that may change the seeming aspect of its teaching. Our duty is "to take heed," to study it, to bring to bear on it the available treasures of thought and learning, and at the same time to make way for the day-star to arise in our hearts and throw its rays on the darkness we seek to penetrate. As seen in this light, we have no guarantee that the interpretation will agree with what has been set forth by earlier human teachers; but however that may be, we are justified by this text in expecting larger and more progressive views of divine truth in proportion as we search, and the day-dawn of the spirit acts on the

[1] 2 Peter 1 : 19.

soul as the dawning on the landscape, bringing into relief the mountains whose outlines have only heretofore been dimly discerned, and revealing all the wealth of nature's loveliness and charm.

While we may well hesitate to subscribe, without saving restrictions, to the old Greek skeptic's assertion that, "Man is the measure of all things," and while it is doubtful whether human nature ultimately supplies the criteria of truth, it is evident that what he is himself in culture, in learning, in spiritual development, will determine his expositions of revealed religion. He cannot transcend himself. And what is true of an individual is true of a community and of an age. Pobyedonostseff repeats the following story from an Arabic poem :

> Once Moses came upon a shepherd praying in the wilderness to God. This was the shepherd's prayer : "How shall I know where to find thee, and how to be thy servant? How I should wish to put on thy sandals, to comb thy hair, to wash thy garments, to kiss thy feet, to care for thy dwelling, to give thee milk from my herd ; for such is the desire of my heart !" Moses, when he heard the words of the shepherd, was angered and reproached him. "Thou blasphemest ! The Most High God has no body ; he wants neither clothing nor dwelling nor service. What dost thou mean, unbeliever ?" The heart of the shepherd was saddened, because he could not conceive a being without bodily form and corporeal needs ; he was taken by despair and ceased to serve the Lord. But God spoke to Moses and said : "Why hast thou driven away from me my servant? . . To me words are nothing. I look into the heart of man."[1]

From this parable of Djelalledin, we perceive what he saw, that the shepherd could not rise above the level

[1] "Reflections of a Russian Statesman," p. 154.

of his meagre intelligence, and that he could only interpret God and the things of God in harmony with his own simple attainments. But his failure makes manifest the possibility of other and higher conceptions, if the conditions are changed. That is, a mind not in bondage to the shepherd's ignorance would escape from his extreme anthropomorphism and would arrive at a loftier view of the Supreme. We are also to learn from the parable the duty of patience with those whose lack of mental grasp and whose bondage to crude traditions keep them ever formulating theologies after the most childish and kindergarten fashion. But patience must not degenerate into indifference or into a willing connivance with error. The fact that higher, deeper, and more spiritual conceptions are attainable, indicates that we owe it to our Lord and to his kingdom to use our utmost endeavors to create them and to bring to their creation all the treasures of our scholarship and reflection. It will not do to plead that if we do this we shall be criticised and may lose caste among our contemporaries. All disabilities we must risk. The human element is in religion for this very purpose, that it may unfold the teachings of Christianity, may develop its ideals, may unveil its mysteries, may enable the soul more clearly to behold God as he is, and may purge theology from all belittling and superstitious dogmas. This comes within the scope of its legitimate and necessary vocation, and its fulfillment is not only inseparable from religious progress, but is in a very real sense a phase of the progress itself.

But when Christianity is represented as a book religion, its significance has not been exhausted. It is like-

wise spiritual—a term that carries with it a suggestion of most gracious personal experiences. Our Lord promised the Comforter, the Holy Spirit; and the history of the period following his ascension is full of accounts which bring into prominence the ministry of the Paraclete. It was his descent which brought the enlarging and emancipating blessings of Pentecost. And these were not designed to be exceptional and evanescent; for Christ assured his disciples of their permanence: "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, *and make our abode with him.*" "For he dwelleth with you and shall be in you." Subsequently, when the council of Jerusalem came to the close of its session, the record of its findings runs in such a way as to reveal the most intimate relation between the divine and human: "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost *and to us.*" "And to us" indicates an interblending of the two intelligences, the mind of God and the mind of man, and declares that the decision reached was agreeable to both. Of God's people, it is written: "A holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." And "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?" Professor Harnack is, therefore, warranted in declaring that "originally the church was the heavenly bride of Christ and the abiding-place of the Holy Spirit." But, more than this, Bishop Webb is in accord with the Scriptures when he adds: "The Holy Spirit not only dwells in the church as his habitation, but also uses her as the living organism whereby he moves and walks forth in the world *and speaks to the world* and acts

upon the world." Even Gregory Nazianzen perceived this centuries ago and expressed it in yet stronger language: "But now the Holy Ghost is given more perfectly, for he is no longer present by his operations as of old, but is present with us, so to speak, *and converses with us in a substantial manner.*" And Cardinal Manning acknowledges that we are "under the personal guidance of the Third Person, as truly as the apostles were under the guidance of the Second."[1] These various and yet kindred statements from the pens of men inspired and uninspired, point to only one conclusion, that Christianity is not merely a book religion, a religion that discloses nominal relations between God and man, but is an experimental religion, that is, one which makes these relations actual in the sphere of personal experience. Man lives with God, communes with him, receives him, is influenced by him, while he, in turn, lives with him, talks with him, and speaks through him to the world.

Out of this relationship, there are forced on us two reasonable inferences. The first is that the divine revelation of himself is not yet complete. It has always seemed a violent assumption on the part of certain theologians that the Almighty had no other message to give mankind beyond what is contained in Holy Writ. That he should have spoken to a group of Hebrews and then have fallen dumb forever demands a tremendous amount of credulity to accept. His silence in the presence of ages differing in knowledge and culture from the primi-

[1] On this section, see John 14, 16, 20; Acts 2, 10, 11; Rom. 8 : 11–23; 1 Cor. 12; 1 Cor. 3 : 16; 6 : 19; Gal. 5 : 5; Manning, "Temporal Mission of Holy Ghost"; Luthardt, "Saving Truths," Chap. VI.

tive period, when it is alleged he frequently opened his lips, is, to say the least of it, were it true, extraordinary and disquieting. The human intellect, having outgrown the conceptions of antiquity, and having to face new problems, and problems never anticipated by the authors of the New Testament, it would seem as though the Infinite mind ought to express itself anew; and I, for one, believe that during these nineteen centuries, he has not copied the reticence of the Sphinx. Abiding with man, he yet discloses himself to man; and these communications would have been more clearly perceived but for the obstinate determination in some circles not to regard them as possible.

While the Bible contains a supreme revelation, and while no fresh light will set aside its teachings or supersede its authority, it is also an example of a permanent method in the divine dealings with the church. Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit; and holy men may yet speak under the same gracious impulse. What has been done is, within limits, yet possible; and if supplementary communications already made, or to be made, are not collected in a book to become, like the Bible, a rule of faith and practice, the reason is that one such rule or measurement by which all "the spirits are to be tried" is quite sufficient; and that it is now apparently the design of God to distribute his messages through many volumes, where they may surprise the common reader and influence his thought and life, and not be restricted to a single official and authorized standard. This does not in any way affect the unique position and authority of Holy Writ. It remains the one standard to which all teachings must be brought

for trial. It is the one great and reliable judge of what is of God and in harmony with the mind of God. Still does it govern in the councils of his church and in the shaping of doctrine.

But, in addition, the stress laid in the New Testament on the actual relationship between the human and divine warrants a second inference, that the spiritual growth and increasing purity of the soul are due to this intercourse. When it is asked, How does a man become better through religion? the true answer is, By contact with God—contact close and enduring. It was often the Master's touch that imparted healing, and healing always necessitated his presence or his word. In the sublimer experiences of the soul, the explanation of the changes wrought is to be found in similar contact. There is a vague impression abroad that the new life is the result of some kind of mechanical reconstruction; whereas, like all life, it springs from relationships, and its development is fostered in the same manner. Hence, the importance of prayer; for what is prayer, if it is not the intercourse of man with God? And hence, the constant command that we walk with God; for how can two agree if they walk not together? The more deeply this is realized, the fuller and more complete will be our affiance with the Eternal Spirit; and if we converse with him, seek his illumination, and strive to preserve his fellowship, we shall necessarily become more conscientious, more devout, and more self-sacrificing.

And along this line, progress has been made during the last hundred years. More volumes have been published relative to the mission of the Holy Spirit than at any other period; and never in the past, at least since

the apostolic age, has the church manifested as much anxiety for his presence and power. While, doubtless, the views here expressed are in advance of accepted beliefs, it seems to me that the thought of the church is moving continually in their direction. But whatever may be true as to her thought, her life has furnished evidence that she feels an increasing desire to be governed and swayed by the Spirit of God ; and unquestionably it is her duty, even as it is her privilege, to press forward toward the attainment of this glorious end. In this way the human continues to fulfill itself in a divine religion, and in so doing brings out the spiritual nature of religion and exalts it higher and higher above the superstitions and meretricious systems which have too long posed in its name. We are often dissatisfied that the results are so slow in maturing, and, moreover, because, to all appearances, the object cannot be achieved by methods more direct and more speedy in their working ; but why complain ? All substances and agencies can only operate in harmony with the laws of their being ; and it is foolish in us to expect them to do otherwise. The story is told of Richard Wagner that an eminent orchestral leader went to him on one occasion and offered to resign, as he found it impossible to execute the score, and his band could do no better than himself ; and that the eminent composer replied that he must go back to his task, as he never expected the musicians to play the score as it was written, and had only designed that they should approximate to it, and that, in so doing, they were producing the effect contemplated. Neither ought we to allow ourselves to be disheartened by the slow progress made in realizing the highest ideals, nor

by our failures completely to reproduce them in our lives. Were God to answer, he would remind us that in religion he ever keeps the ideal ahead of the actual, that we may continually strive after it; and that by our conscious inability to do more than approximate, we are carrying out his plan, which is, by constant endeavors toward perfection to develop our own spiritual being, and thereby to impress the world with something of the magnitude and of the unapproachable sublimity of what is involved in the religion of Jesus Christ.

There is still another aspect of this religion to be considered. It is not only distinguished by its revelation and by its spirituality, it is also remarkable for its practical genius. Christianity is not a faith to be secretly cherished, nor an experience to be privately enjoyed, but a work designed to be operative in the manifold departments of human life. When, blinded to its true vocation, it has sought to fulfill itself supremely in glittering ceremonials, in stately processionings, and in a wearisome round of sacerdotal observances, it has surely lost its hold on society as an invigorating and regenerating force. The God-ordained sphere of the spiritual is the secular; and when it gives too much thought and labor to the elaboration of rubrics, and to the cut and shape of ecclesiastical robes, the energy that ought to have spent itself on social reforms is exhausted, and the phenomenon is presented of a church growing in splendor and affluence, while the community where it dwells and which it ought to have blessed slowly declines in strength and in those high qualities which make for prosperity and happiness. I have no hesitancy in saying that history has proven that when-

ever a church has lived for herself, for her own aggrandizement, for her own political power, and for her own magnificence, she has become an intolerable burden and a barrier in the way of human progress. Why should she be different from her Lord? He saved others, but himself he could not save; for to save others, it was necessary that he should sacrifice himself; and the principle which governed his ministry will hold good as long as the world endures. Therefore, the church is bound to fasten her gaze on society more than on herself, and to consecrate herself to the work of making society more and more Christian.

Toward the higher view, that the church is to realize herself and her mission in the progress and improvement of mankind, marked strides have been taken during recent years. It is not, however, to be regarded as a novelty; for not only does it appear in the teachings of Christ, but germinally it may be traced in the writings of the Fathers. Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria have visions similar to Augustine's "City of God," in which the divine life, extending through and mastering the race, is contemplated and developed. Origen, with even greater clearness, in his treatise "*De Principiis*," anticipated the triumph of the Christian spirit in all the varied relations and multiform interests of society. The Alexandrian theology, which for many years suffered eclipse from the singular fascination of Augustine's reasoning, has of late emerged from the shadow, and has revived the earlier conceptions of a kingdom embracing within its ample boundary everything divine and human. Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, was one of the first English expounders of the theory. Dean Fremantle

has pushed it so far as to maintain that the rulers of nations, and not the clergy only, are the ministers of religion. Theologians like Maurice, Flint, Bruce, Mulford, Ritschl, Rothe, Martensen, and a multitude of others, have advocated the same general conception, and have insisted on the consecration and sanctity of all life. As a result of this return to what I am bound to regard as the thought of Jesus Christ, the age has witnessed an encouraging diffusion of Christian sentiment and the not altogether unsuccessful attempts of the Christian soul to incarnate itself in the gross body of secular society. Not that this union is complete or anything like it. But it has made some progress, and the heavenly spirit has at times been able to refine and beautify its earthly tenements. There are to-day multiplied philanthropies, reforms, and the almost endless benefactions on behalf of the suffering and oppressed. While it is impossible to close our eyes to the failures of the church to remedy manifold evils, still it does seem as though she had rendered the public, if not the official, conscience more sensitive than formerly, and had been able to soften it, if not so to enlighten it as to make it a faithful guide. But on this subject I can only speak in general terms at present. It is too early in the development of my theme to undertake anything like accurate measurements of religious achievements or shortcomings. All I desire to accentuate in this connection is, that there has been an advance, that Christianity has gone farther than in former times toward the leavening of the world's life, and that her influence is conspicuous in the moral affairs of society.

It is occasionally intimated that instead of moving

onward there are not lacking signs of her waning power over thought and activity. Among these, the diminished attendance on church services has been singled out particularly. It has been repeatedly said that the sanctuary is being more and more neglected, and that consequently, while Christian sentiment may have gained, Christian faith has evidently lost ground. I am not oblivious to the seriousness of this falling away, and shall discuss it later; neither am I, however, disposed to be unduly alarmed by its proportions. Church attendance is frequently affected by local circumstances, or may be determined by the temporary supremacy of certain general unfavorable conditions, such as war, or the absorbing claims of unexpected and much-desired business prosperity. At times the migration of citizens, the apathy of pastors, the wrangling of discordant saints, the encroachments of Sabbath work, or the mistaken assumption that the gospel has no more to do in a particular community, may account for the diminished number of worshipers without having recourse to the explanation that they have ceased to have confidence in Christianity itself. A new voice in the pulpit, a quickened interest in the congregation, a fresh consciousness that spiritual life is returning, and the entire aspect of affairs may change. And if on a wide scale there is a departure from the public solemnities of God's house, some such awakening may produce equally desirable results. Deplorable as the forsaken courts of the Lord appear at present, we should not abandon hope that a reaction must come. What is now so depressing we have no reason to regard as a permanent condition and an irreversible finality. Local congregations fluctuate

and their size is often determined by other than religious convictions; and the same rule is applicable to church attendance generally. Without in the least undertaking to minimize the significance of the many vacant seats in the sanctuary, we ought not so to magnify it as to become panic-stricken. Moreover, we should remember, while crowds of people do not everywhere seek her altars, the beneficent and undiminished power of Christianity is manifested on every side, in the literature she has inspired, in the schools she has founded, in the criminals she has reclaimed, in the benefactions she has inaugurated; and if there are still domains, such as the political, the industrial, the artistic, the commercial, where her conquests have been partial and are even now precarious, we should nevertheless believe from what she has wrought in the past that she is bound to succeed even thus in the future. Her warfare is yet incomplete. She is in the midst of the battle; and could it be shown that her failure to penetrate the lines of the foe was more serious than it is, he would be a reckless prophet who, knowing her history, should dare predict her ultimate defeat.

It is evident that whatever Christianity has made itself to the world, and whatever it has achieved, has been due to the co-operation of the human with the divine. Man assuredly cannot be excluded from its practical life. If it has been forced out of the cloister to confront the actual sufferings of the race; if it has been freed from the cabinets of kings that it might breathe a divine spirit on the workshop; and if it has been aroused from its mystical reveries that it might descend from the mount of Transfiguration to the

grander work of saving children and men,—the human instrument has been indispensable to the changes wrought. And from the past we may gather what must always be our right, our duty, our responsibility. Christianity, as it appears in history, is frequently seen correcting itself, revising its creeds, translating its Scriptures, modifying its forms, altering its methods, and in general attempting to adapt itself to the varying needs of the age; and when it has temporarily resisted innovations, when it has tried to remain rigid, inflexible, antiquated, it has speedily lost power, and, though protesting against the human, has been obliged finally to yield to its molding and remodeling touch. Professor Herron, in one of his lectures, says truly: "All the instruments and observatories are not part of the message of the stars. They are means only for their interpretation; and they would be cast aside in a moment if they did not serve their purpose."[1] And why should theologies, modes of worship, implements of spiritual husbandry, and systems of Sunday-school instruction be retained when they have outgrown their usefulness and are no longer fit to render religion operative, or to enable her to fulfill her mission in the world? What our fathers have done, why, if the same necessity exists, should not we do, and do it without hesitancy and without apologies? The human element has been incorporated into Christianity for just such purposes. It has no place there at all, if it has not the right to free religion from incrustations that impede its activity, and to supply it with the most improved weapons for its world-wide conquests.

[1] "Between Cæsar and Jesus."

A few years since, about 1883, the Duomo at Florence was the center of universal interest and agitation. Giotto's glorious Campanile, the magnificent towers of Bargello, the old edifice of San Miniato, and the ragged walls around Fiesole, had all quite lost their attractions for the population that thronged the Piazza, where the great church, with its dome transcending in size that of the Pantheon or St. Peter's, defined its outlines against the transparent blue of the Italian sky. These crowds collected day after day, not for the purpose of concerting revolutionary measures, but that they might discuss the to them momentous question whether the façade of the church should be finished in the tricuspidal or basilical style. All of the citizens took sides on this grave issue, women and children sharing in the debate, the privileged ones voting for the one style or the other. It seems singular that a matter of architecture and decoration should be decided by majorities; but it should be remembered that the people of Florence have been educated in art, and that their intelligent appreciation of the pictures, statuary, and venerable frescoes which beautify their city eminently qualify them to express a judgment and direct æsthetical affairs. It is of small concern to us how they voted; but the right they claimed and the privilege they exercised vividly remind us of another and more glorious edifice and the relation of humanity to its completion. Christianity is a temple still unfinished. It has grown through the ages, and at every stage of its advance we can detect the hand of man. What it shall be in the future, he will determine. Within certain limits, he is to be, as he has been in the past, its architect and builder. There is no possible

escape from the responsibility. It is placed on man, because religion will always in many of its aspects be an expression of his spirit, his culture, his aims. He should, therefore, address himself seriously to his task, nor permit an official few who would usurp his prerogative to rudely condemn his active solicitude for the harmonious development of Christianity. And if thoughtful and devout souls shall realize that on them, as well as on theologians and preachers, rests this obligation, and shall prayerfully and reverently seek its discharge, then we may expect the dream of the poet, which was also the vision of the prophets, to be fulfilled :

> In time to be
> Shall holier altars rise to thee—
> Thy church our broad humanity.
> White flowers of love its walls shall climb,
> Soft bells of peace shall ring its chime,
> Its days shall all be holy time.
> A sweeter song shall then be heard,
> The music of the world's accord
> Confessing Christ, the Inward Word.

III

THE MEDIEVAL AND MODERN

Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead thou me on;
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead thou me on;
Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

—*Newman.*

III

THE RENAISSANCE OF MEDIEVAL ROMAN CATHOLICISM

The original Renaissance marked, on its intellectual and literary side, the transition from that period of history known as the Middle Ages to that which is termed Modern. It consisted in a rebirth of the classical spirit and in a temporary burial of the poetry and lengendary literature of the Middle Ages, such as "Barlaam and Josaphat," the "*Nibelungenlied*," the "Book of Heroes," and the "Holy Grail," and it revived a love of Greek art, as well as of Greek letters. The place of its nativity was within the charmed circle of the Roman Catholic world, whose power it undermined and toward whose disintegration it contributed. Unquestionably it facilitated and almost rendered inevitable the Reformation. According to Heine:

> Leo X., the magnificent Medici, was just as zealous a Protestant as Luther; and as in Wittenberg protest was offered in Latin prose, so in Rome the protest was made in stone, colors, and ottava rhymes. For do not the vigorous marble statues of Michelangelo, Giulio Romano's laughing nymph faces, and the life-intoxicated merriment in the verses of Master Ludovico, offer a protesting contrast to the old, gloomy, withered Catholicism? The painters of Italy combated priestdom more effectively, perhaps, than did the Saxon theologians.[1]

The Renaissance was thus, in a sense, the reawakening of paganism and its victory over the dominant type

[1] "The Romantic School," p. 19.

of Christianity. It plainly announced that great Pan was not dead, and bound him in alliance with the mighty spiritual movement of the times, which, in its turn, while using him, held him as captive and would not admit him to companionship on terms of equality.

But the Roman Church was destined to be avenged. The reaction was long in coming, but it came at last. Classicism ran its weary and desolating round, and finally introduced the glacial era in literature and religion. The early part of the eighteenth century was a frozen world. Its ideals were sharp, hard, and monotonous. Change was dreaded, and artificiality was regnant. While there was some sparkle, glitter, and flash, as there is in the Arctic regions, the prevailing temperature was low, and men who ventured on reforms were like some too adventurous whalers caught in the ice floes—they were chilled to death by the bitter atmosphere, or were crushed in the floes of icy criticism. Occasionally there was heard a strident protest, resembling the grinding noise of conflicting icebergs, followed only by painful silence. Protestantism also slept the winter sleep beneath the benumbing snows, and Catholicism was frostbitten in the hyperborean blasts. From this glacial period the world was rescued, not alone by the revivals of evangelical religion, which began under the Wesleys, but to some extent by a remarkable revival of medievalism. As the Reformation and classicism combined in delivering humanity from the senility and dotage of medievalism, so now medievalism rises from the dead to aid in overthrowing its ancient enemy.

Among the leaders of this movement in Germany, where it originated, appear the brothers, August William

and Frederick Schlegel, and it came to be known in literature as romanticism. This school, which was to have such tremendous influence on the nineteenth century, was explained by these brothers in the "Athenæum." "The beginning of all poetry," they wrote, "is to suspend the course and the laws of rationally thinking reason, and to transport us again into the lovely vagaries of fancy and the primitive chaos of human nature. . . The free-will of the poet submits to no law." Consequently and naturally, the best models and illustrations of their theory were found in the Roman Catholic productions of the Middle Ages. The Schlegels, Tieck, Novalis, and others who sympathized with them, "loved the realm of the imagination and hated the rationalism that had expelled miracle from nature and mystery from man, making the universe the home of the prosaic and commonplace. They disliked the cold classicism of Goethe and even the warmer humanism of Schiller, and said, "Man needs an imagination to interpret the universe, and he is happy only as he has a universe peopled by it and for it."[1] And, continuing, Principal Fairbairn writes: "Admiration for the past, though it was a past that was a pure creature of the imagination, easily became belief in the church that claimed it as its own; and so romanticism in men like Stolberg, Frederick Schlegel, and Werner, passed by natural gradation into Catholicism." These men were born Protestants, as were Adam Müller, Carové, Schütz, and Fritz Stolberg before they abjured reason; and when they "pressed their way into the ancient prisons of the mind, from which their fathers so valiantly liberated them-

[1] "Catholicism, Roman and Anglican," p. 97.

selves, there was much misgiving felt in Germany." But the transition was perfectly logical. Imagination in letters easily begets imagination in faith, and the Germany of the Middle Ages could hardly fail to have a strong hold on the imagination. It was then glorious as the world-empire of the Hohenstaufen, was then rich in the poems of the court minnesingers, and was then magnificent in the splendors of its Gothic architecture. With the thought of political sovereignty were associated the deeds of heroism; with the memory of legendary song, the idea of fancy; and with mighty cathedrals, the miracles of saintly men and women. A return to such an epoch for inspiration could hardly fail to quicken the imagination, and, unless local causes operated as a restraint, would inevitably tend in the direction of visionary creations, the effect of which would be felt, and perhaps supremely, on religion. So self-evident is this that Max Nordau, writing of the founders of this school in literature, says: "That which enchanted them in the idea of the Middle Ages . . . was Catholicism with its belief in miracles and its worship of saints. 'Our divine service,' writes H. von Kleist, 'is nothing of the kind. It appeals only to cold reason. A Catholic feast appeals profoundly to all the senses.' The obscure symbolism of Catholicism; all the externals of its priestly motions; all its altar service, so full of mystery; all the magnificence of its vestments, sacerdotal vessels, works of art; the overwhelming effects of the thunder of the organ; the fumes of incense; the flashing monstrance—all these undoubtedly stir more confused and ambiguous adumbrations of ideas than does austere Protestantism." [1]

[1] "Degeneration," p. 73.

Thus, then, as all students of these times agree, the revolt from classicism produced romanticism ; and romanticism, in Germany and elsewhere, led, directly or indirectly, to the renaissance of what the original Renaissance mostly seriously assailed—medieval Roman Catholicism.

In France, however, the movement did not set in this direction. Here we meet the usual exception to all rules. It must be remembered that the French people had, for a long while, been disillusioned on the subject of the papacy. While in Germany the massive Protestantism of the land had hidden from view the harsh and objectionable features of the Roman Church, in France they had been accentuated by many years of ecclesiastical misrule and flagrant abuse. Here, therefore, local circumstances, which need not be analyzed, diverted romanticism from religious channels. There was enough in the Middle Ages, apart from religious mysteries, mummeries, and miracles, to excite a people like the French, wild with the frenzy of the Revolution.

> That was the period of great crimes and great passions, of marble palaces, of dresses glittering with gold, and of intoxicating revels ; a period in which the æsthetic prevailed over the useful, and the fantastic over the rational, and when crime itself was beautiful, because assassination was accomplished with a chased and damascened poniard, and the poison was handed in goblets wrought by Benvenuto Cellini.[1]

Not singular, surely, that such an era should fascinate the men who had grown weary of the monotony of cold and mediocre classicism ; and that, enamored of its striking and weird features, they should give to the world

[1] Max Nordau, "Degeneration," p. 74.

the heroes of Victor Hugo, Alexander Dumas, Théophile Gautier, and Alfred de Musset.

In England, romanticism in its course followed more closely the German original; and while it displayed its spirit in the wonderful volumes of Sir Walter Scott, it seemed mainly to seek, as it ultimately found, its chief expression in Christian thought and life. There, as in Germany, it made for the renaissance of medieval Roman Catholicism, and the particular movement by which its development was determined has passed into history under the name of "The Oxford Movement."

But this movement did not originate in a deliberate purpose to substitute Romanism for Anglicanism, or in any plot to restore papal supremacy in England. Whatever it may have led to, nothing of this kind was contemplated at the beginning; and when, subsequently, its drift was discovered to be in this direction, many of its early friends withdrew from it their sympathy and active support. It was originally called forth by the increasing tide of liberalism, which was running swift and high in the early part of the present century, and which, it was supposed, jeopardized the English Church, both as an ecclesiastical system and as a State institution. To stem this dangerous current, and to avert what many persons believed would be a national and a religious disaster, was apparently the immediate motive which determined a distinguished group of Oxford men to begin an agitation whose far-reaching consequences they themselves could not have anticipated. And it must be admitted that, from their standpoint, the peril which threatened was neither imaginary nor trivial; for it was not one wholly external to the church and acting upon her from

without, but was one that had a stronghold within and was already operating outwardly from the center to the circumference. A significant passage in the "*Apologia*" throws a strong and reliable light on the situation, and is worthy of careful consideration. Mr. Newman writes: "The Reform agitation was going on around me. The Whigs had come into power; Lord Gray had told the bishops to set their house in order, and some of the prelates had been insulted and threatened in the streets of London. The vital question was, How were we to keep the church from being liberalized? There was such apathy on the subject in some quarters, such imbecile alarm in others; the true principles of churchmanship seemed so radically decayed, and there was such distraction in the councils of the clergy. . . With the Establishment thus divided and threatened, thus ignorant of its true strength, I compared that fresh, vigorous power of which I was reading in the first centuries. . . I saw that Reformation principles were powerless to rescue her. As to leaving her, the thought never crossed my imagination; still I always kept before me that there was something greater than the Established Church, and that was the Church Catholic and Apostolic, set up from the beginning, of which she was but the local presence and organ. She was nothing unless she was this. She must be dealt with strongly or she would be lost. There was need of a second Reformation."[1]

To his account may be added some other particulars, which justified his apprehensions. These were the days when Sir Robert Peel, then member for Oxford, had been compelled to introduce his bill for the eman-

[1] "*Apologia Pro Vita Sua*," p. 93.

cipation of Roman Catholics. These were the days when Bentham's utilitarianism was entering into alliance with science, and was subjecting Christianity to an altogether new test. These were the days of Holland House, of Lord Brougham's society for the "Diffusion of Useful Knowledge," and of the formation of the British Association. These were the days when Coleridge's transcendentalism was displacing Hume's empiricism, and was enlisting the speculative reason in the service of revealed religion. These were the days when Goethe's ideal of culture challenged the ideal of Christianity; when Byron repudiated moral conventionalities in the name of freedom; when Shelley thrilled the world with storm songs against every form of oppression; and when Wordsworth was bringing the soul of man into closer fellowship with nature. And these were the times when political revolutions were startling France; when social reforms were beginning to be agitated in almost every capital of Europe, when sentiments regarded as alien to the genius of the English Church had been planted in her bosom by her own children; and when the non-prelatical sects had the temerity to suggest that the requirement of subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles from young men at matriculation should be abolished by the orthodox University of Oxford.[1]

Indeed, it must be conceded that opinions were in circulation among the clergy and laity of the English Church, and which had originated among her own leaders, which went far toward placing her on the same level with the much despised Dissenters. These may

[1] Dean Church, "Oxford Movement," Chap. VIII.

be traced to the early Oriel school, representative of liberal theological teachings, with which the names of Whately, Arnold, Hampden, Milman, Chevalier Bunsen, and Blanco White were intimately associated. Whately was rather destructive in his methods. Many current beliefs he swept away, and among them the notion that any priesthood exists under the gospel other than the common priesthood of all Christians. He rejected verbal inspiration, did not rest the observance of the Lord's Day on the Fourth Commandment, and could not be brought to subscribe to Anglo-Catholic theology any more than he could countenance the assumptions of German rationalism.[1] Arnold was even more radical and revolutionary. He argued that Christianity, whether or not acceptable as a philosophy, was not something dependent on organizations and sects, but was a life-blood permeating society, and influencing colleges, literature, and politics. As Dean Church testifies:

> Arnold divided the world into Christians and non-Christians. Christians were all who professed to believe in Christ as a Divine Person and to worship him; and the brotherhood, the "*societas*" of Christians, was all that was meant by the "church" in the New Testament. It mattered, of course, to the conscience of each Christian what he had made up his mind to believe, but to no one else. Church organization was, according to circumstances, partly inevitable or expedient, partly mischievous, but in no case of divine authority. Teaching, ministering the word, was a thing of divine appointment, but not so the mode of exercising it, either as to persons, forms, or methods.[2]

Rather rank and extreme opinions these, for a mem-

[1] Whately, "Cautions for the Times" and "Historic Doubts."

[2] "Oxford Movement," p. 6.

ber of a prelatical establishment to hold, and not so widely divergent from those published by Coleridge in 1830 as may be supposed. The philosopher, in his discussion of the subject, discriminates between the Christian church and a national church.

> The former is spiritual and catholic; the latter, institutional and local. The former is opposed to the "world"; the latter is an estate of the realm. The former has nothing to do with States and kingdoms. It is in this respect identical with the spiritual and invisible church known only to the Father of Spirits, and the compensating counterpoise of all that is in the world. It is, in short, the divine aggregate of what is really divine in all Christian communities and more or less ideally represented in every true church.[1]

These Coleridgian ideas quickly diffused themselves and permeated the general intellectual atmosphere; but to say the least of them, they were hardly conducive to a high type of Anglicanism. Nor were the teachings of Dr. Hampden, whose appointment as Regius Professor of Divinity, made by Lord Melbourne, created intense feeling at Oxford, calculated to inspire the world with reverent respect for the authority of churches and councils. It seemed, therefore, as though the establishment was being betrayed by her own sons, and that they were aiding her enemies beyond her pale by the advocacy of sentiments irreconcilable with her claims as, in an exceptional and exclusive sense, the Church Catholic and apostolic.

From the general character of these teachings, as well as from the trend of the times, we can, at a glance,

[1] "On Constitution of Church and State," "Religious Thought in Britain in the Nineteenth Century."

make out the real animus and aims of the Oxford Movement. It was evidently intended to be and in fact could be nothing less than a protest against liberalism in politics, in theology, and in church order. It was a distinct and solemn repudiation of the spirit of the age; and in rendering the haughty rejection of progress consistent and effective, it became necessary to advance an adequate organizing principle, and such a principle was found underlying the Catholicism of medieval times.

That this was its primary motive and method hardly calls for proof; and yet a few excerpts from the writings of its leaders will avert any possible suspicion of misrepresentation. A crisis was reached in 1833. "Ten Irish bishoprics had been suppressed, and church people were told to be thankful that things were no worse." In consequence of this and of other Erastian proceedings, Keble preached his famous assize sermon at St. Mary's on "National Apostasy." This discourse had a quickening effect on the friends who were mourning over the condition of the English Church. They combined more thoroughly; they arranged for petitions against innovations; and they planned the issue of tracts, which gave rise to the name Tractarian as applied to the Oxford Movement at its initial stage. These tracts created a sensation. They were short, sharp, almost shrill, like bugle calls to battle; and we gain an idea of their purpose, confirming what I have already said, from the confession of Newman, who thus writes of the spirit that animated him in their distribution and incidentally of the work they were expected to accomplish: "I did not care whether my visits were made to High Church or Low Church; I wished to make a strong pull in

union with all those who were opposed to the principles of liberalism, whoever they might be." They were therefore designed to combat the progressive spirit of the age. But what means did they employ for the furtherance of this end? The keynote of Tract 1 was "Apostolical Succession"; and this, with some other kindred doctrines, is referred to in the introduction, printed when the first series of tracts was issued as a volume, and these references enable us to judge on what their authors relied for success. They would have a child taught that "the Sacraments, not preaching, are the sources of divine grace; that the apostolic ministry has a virtue in it which went out over the whole church, and that fellowship with it was a gift and a privilege." But whatever doubt may have existed in the public mind relative to the significance of this movement was set at rest by the appearance of Tract 90, and its contents substantiate what we have thus far maintained. Its object was to show that the Thirty-nine Articles were not irreconcilable with Catholic teaching, and that it was doubtful, even, whether they intentionally and directly contradicted the definitions of the Council of Trent. Moreover, it argued that, though Rome might be wrong, she might not be as wrong as some persons alleged; and that the Articles, while condemning error, might even be harmonized with Roman authoritative language.[1] The publication of this document led to aggravated discussion and dissension. Oxford and other centers of thought and influence were more than agitated; they were convulsed. The men who could best judge the drift of the Tract cried out, "Popery,"

[1] Church, "Oxford Movement," Chap. XIV.

and understood it as favoring a movement toward Rome. They declared that such a current had already commenced, although they could not then determine its strength or its swiftness. On this point, there was no doubt; and this judgment on the part of the best qualified critics, taken together with the tendencies the Oxford Movement was avowedly inaugurated to antagonize, establishes beyond reasonable question that the movement was essentially a renaissance of medieval Catholicism, with an inevitable, though at the beginning an unconscious, trend in the direction of papal supremacy.

After the circulation of Tract 90, the renaissance developed itself with more clearness and definiteness. It moved along two different and yet converging lines, and these lines were distinctly marked in the careers of two notable men, Dr. Newman and Dr. Pusey. But before tracing its unfolding in their lives, John Keble and Richard Hurrell Froude, who were intimately related to the events taking place at Oxford, are entitled at least to brief mention, as they seem in their convictions to have anticipated, as well as by their efforts to have promoted, the Catholic renaissance. The authorship of Tractarianism, Newman ascribes to the poet Keble, because of the personal influence he had exerted on its leaders. He was a man of high and saintly character, imbued with the spirit of romanticism as well as of piety, and in 1827 had moved thousands of English hearts by the new music of the "Christian Year." Newman writes:

> The two main intellectual truths it brought home to me were . . . in a large sense of the word the Sacramental System; that is, the doctrine that material phenomena are both the types and

the instruments of real things unseen—a doctrine which embraces not only what Anglicans as well as Catholics believe about Sacraments, properly so called, but likewise the article of "the Communion of the Saints" and "the Mysteries of the Faith."

Undoubtedly, the work was a refreshment to many; and multitudes who have not too nicely inquired into its doctrine have been strengthened in their faith by its sweetness and tenderness, and by its positiveness and devoutness. Hurrell Froude was a pupil of Keble's, and shared his sentiments, though not sharing with him his poetic temperament. Though in various respects a very different man, the romantic element was not lacking in his composition. He was the Bayard and Prince Rupert of Tractarianism. Strong in his convictions, vivid in imagination, quick-sighted and brave, he was more than ready to venture a lance in conflict with the defenders of hated liberalism. Of him James Mozley writes after this fashion: "Froude is growing stronger and stronger in his sentiments every day, and cuts about him on all sides. It is extremely fine to hear him talk." But, "I would not set down anything that Froude says for his deliberate opinion, for he really hates the present state of things so excessively that any change would be a relief to him." He was particularly hard on the Reformers, and he did not hesitate to say that the Roman Church was nearer right in principle and practice than England had been taught to believe. But he never abandoned the English Church. What he might have done had he been spared, no one can tell; but, always infirm in health, he died in 1836.[1] Of him Newman writes in the most appreciative terms:

[1] Froude's "Remains"; J. B. Mozley's "Letters."

He professed openly his admiration of the Church of Rome and his hatred of the Reformers. He delighted in the notion of a hierarchical system of sacerdotal power and of full ecclesiastical liberty (independent of secular control). He felt scorn of the maxim, "The Bible and the Bible only is the religion of the Protestants"; and he gloried in accepting tradition as a main instrument of religious teaching. He had a high, severe idea of the intrinsic excellence of virginity; and he considered the blessed Virgin its great pattern. . . He embraced the principle of penance and mortification. He had a deep devotion to the Real Presence, in which he had a firm faith. He was powerfully drawn to the Medieval Church, but not to the Primitive. . . He taught me to look with admiration toward the Church of Rome, and in the same degree to dislike the Reformation.

From these testimonies, it becomes evident that these celebrated men, Keble and Froude, held in solution the elementary principles of the renaissance, and that largely through their personal influence they were finally crystallized into the definite forms it assumed, of which Newman and Pusey were the most pronounced types and the most distinguished exponents.

John Henry Newman was born in the city of London, February 21, 1801, and descended from Dutch and Huguenot ancestry. He says that he was brought up from a child to take delight in reading the Bible. Also he records his deep interest in the "Arabian Nights." "My imagination," he writes, "ran on unknown influences, or magical powers and talismans. . . I thought life might be a dream, or I an angel, and all this world a deception, my fellow-angels by a playful device concealing themselves from me, and deceiving me with the semblance of a material world. I was very superstitious, and for some months previous to my conversion (when

I was fifteen) used constantly to cross myself on going into the dark." Here we have romanticism, mysticism, and medievalism in the bud. Given such a nature, and the actual conditions under which it was to develop, the character of the final product could not be doubtful; for it is to be observed that the life of Newman does not furnish an example of inexplicable transitions or of abrupt intellectual changes. It is simply an unfolding, an orderly advance from the fabulous stories of the "Arabian Nights" to the fictions and illusions of medieval Romanism. What, later on, was termed his conversion to the papacy was not a conversion; neither was it a perversion. It was simply a culmination, an inevitable climax.

When he was fifteen, he was subject to deep religious experiences, and mentions the Rev. Walter Mayers, of Pembroke College, as the instrument of his spiritual enlargement. He was early interested, through Milner's "Church History," in St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, and the other Fathers; and from the reading of Newton on the "Prophecies," became convinced that the pope was antichrist. Of his education in detail it is not necessary that I speak. It is enough for our purpose to say that he matriculated at Trinity College, Oxford, December 14, 1816, when he was yet two months under sixteen years of age. In 1818 he won a Trinity scholarship; obtained his B. A. in 1820; was elected a Fellow of Oriel in 1822; and on June 13, 1824, was ordained deacon and was appointed curate of St. Clement's. His associations and his studies subsequent to this period were all of a nature to strengthen his faith in baptismal regeneration, apostolical succession, and in

the authoritative worth of tradition. In 1829, he appears in vigorous opposition to Peel's re-election ; and in 1830, he was "turned out of the secretaryship of the Church Missionary Society at Oxford," because of a pamphlet in which he had assailed its constitution ; and his antagonism to liberal principles was further marked by his final break with the adherents of Reformation views. He had, in 1828, succeeded Hawkins in the famous pulpit of St. Mary's, where he delivered a series of afternoon sermons, which revealed the trend of his own thought and powerfully reinforced the appeals of the Tractarian leaders. Throughout this period he was profoundly disturbed over the plight of the English Church. He was perplexed and humiliated. His hymn, "Lead, kindly Light," penned when traveling with Froude in the south of Europe for Froude's health, gives some idea of his inner commotion, and the lines from the "*Lyra Apostolica*," some conception of the drift of his mind and of his misgivings :

> How shall I name thee, Light of the Wide West,
> Or heinous error-seat? . . .
> Oh, that thy creed were sound !
> For thou dost soothe the heart, thou Church of Rome,
> By thy unwearied watch and varied round
> Of service, in thy Saviour's holy home.

At this time he began to feel that he had a mission. His servant one day found him weeping, and asked what ailed him, and he answered, "I have a work to do in England." In this vague and mystic condition he arrived at his mother's house at Iffley, June 9, 1833, and was soon after bearing an active part in the Tractarian movement. Concerning his services in this con-

nection, Froude wrote: "Compared with him," all the other contributors were "but as ciphers and he the indicating number." As Dean Church has pointed out, in 1839 the very grave question rose, doubtless called out by much contained in the tracts themselves, whether the Church of England, after all, was really a church. Newman, while investigating the Monophysite controversy, experienced this year for the first time grave doubts as to the tenableness of Anglicanism: "I had seen the shadow of a hand on the wall. He who has seen a ghost cannot be as if he had never seen it. The heavens had opened and closed again." These are his own words, to which he adds: "The thought for the moment had been, the Church of Rome will be found right after all; and then it had vanished." He had indeed seen the hand on the wall—an ominous allusion, however, considering where it first occurs in history; but the consummation was not as yet clearly within sight.

It was somewhat hastened by an article from the pen of Cardinal Wiseman, in which the words of Augustine against the Donatists were quoted, "*Securus judicat orbis terrarum*"[1]—a saying that suggested a simpler rule of judgment on ecclesiastical questions than that of antiquity, and one that apparently favored the assumptions of Rome. But, doubtless, the general condemnation of Tract 90 had more to do with opening his eyes to his own position and to his growing disaffection from Anglican views. "From the end of 1841," he writes, "I was on my deathbed as regards my membership with the Anglican Church, though at the time I became aware of it only by degrees." In 1842, not as yet having re-

[1] "The united world makes no mistake in judgment."

signed St. Mary's, he withdrew to Littlemore, accompanied by a few young adherents, and his house acquired the name of the Littlemore Monastery. "Here he passed the three years of painful anxiety and suspense which preceded his final decision to join the Church of Rome, leading a life of prayer and fasting, and of monastic seclusion."[1] Newman traces for us his mental processes at this critical juncture: "On the one hand, I gradually came to see that the Anglican Church was formally in the wrong; on the other, that the Church of Rome was formally in the right; then that no valid reason could be assigned for continuing in the Anglican, and again that no valid objections could be taken to joining the Roman." So his conclusion was: "There is no help for it; we must either give up the belief in the church as a divine institution altogether, or we must recognize it in that communion of which the pope is the head; we must take things as they are; to believe in a church is to believe in the pope." Such was the character of his reasoning. In 1843 he published a retraction of what he had penned in former years against the papacy. A few months previously he had left St. Mary's for good and all. In 1845 appeared his essay on "Development," justifying his own theological position and resting the claims of the papacy, not on the character of primitive Christianity, but on the historical and divine law of progress as he understood it. Immediately after, on October 9, he was received into the church at his own Littlemore abode by Father Dominic, the Passionist; and during the same year, he was ordained a priest at Rome. Of his preferments and honors as

[1] "Dictionary of National Biography."

a member of the hierarchy, it is unnecessary that we write. We may, however, note, in completing this sketch, that in 1879 he was made Cardinal by Pope Leo XIII., by the title of St. George in Velabro, and that he died at Edgbaston, on August 11, 1890.

Various estimates of Cardinal Newman's character and work have been given to the public by those who knew him personally and who were better qualified to pronounce judgment than we are, who have to depend on the too partial eulogies of his friends or the too violent criticisms of his enemies; but whether he was really as great as his admirers claim, or as subtle and evasive as his detractors insinuate, of his power and remarkable influence there can be no doubt. Many cultured and brilliant men followed him into the Roman communion. It has been estimated that about three thousand persons of education and distinction have been led by his example to abandon the Church of England; and probably the number given is rather lower than the facts warrant. "The Guardian" stated on his death that the Church of England, as we have it in our day, is largely what he made it. But whether this is so or not, and whether it can ever be determined exactly how many Anglicans were moved by his action to seek membership in the Roman hierarchy, one thing is certain, his so-called conversion and the conversion of his associates gave to Roman Catholicism more than a new lease of life in Britain; it lifted it up to rank and honor, and, in no small degree, to public confidence.

On this change, the "Rambler" wrote in 1851, using, among other expressions of gratification, the following language:

From the moment that the Oxford tracts commenced, the Catholic Church assumed a position in this country which she had never before attained since the schism of the sixteenth century. With what a depth of indescribable horror of Catholicism the whole mind of England was formerly saturated few can comprehend who have not experienced it. No one read Catholic books ; no one entered Catholic churches ; no one ever saw Catholic priests ; few people even knew that there were Catholic bishops resident in England. See now the change that has come over the English people as a nation. Crowds attend the services in the Catholic churches . . . and a stillness most profound pays strange homage to the elevation of the most Holy Sacrament.

This is not an overstatement from the overwrought imagination of a Roman journalist. He might have gone further. He might have chronicled the return of some of the noblest families in England to the faith of their sires ; and had he written now, he might graphically have described the solicitude of some prominent Protestants in Parliament to vote public money for the establishment of a Roman Catholic university ; and he might have pointed with warrantable exultation to similar favor now extended to Romanism in the United States. Its magnificent ecclesiastical edifices ; its richly endowed benefactions, educational and philanthropic, which may be found almost everywhere in the great republic ; and its social standing and political influence, all indicate that the renaissance of medieval Catholicism has extended to the New World, and flourishes there as luxuriously as in the Old. I am not here attempting to fix its boundaries. I am not comparing here its progress with the advance of Protestantism and the Protestant principle. Neither am I, in this connection, taking into consideration the alleged existence of signs of decay and reaction.

These things will appeal to us farther on. But here I am merely centering attention on the reality and vigor of this wonderful revival, on its strength and splendor, and on the fact that in Newman's own career we have an exposition of its character and an explanation of its origin.

There is, however, as I have already intimated, another and a not dissimilar line along which the renaissance moved. Two streams flow from one spring; but though they are differently channeled, their waters are strikingly alike. This second form of the one remarkable resuscitation had for its exemplar and leader Edward Bouverie Pusey, who was born at Pusey House, Berkshire, August 22, 1800. His family were descendants from Walloon stock, native to the Low Countries, whose religion was that of the French Reformed Confession; but his parents were Church people and Tories of high degree. His mother's influence in molding his character he always gratefully acknowledged. During his college career he evinced the utmost diligence, and carried off some first-class honors. The miscarriage of an early love affair, and the influence of Lord Byron's poetry, deepened his morbid feelings and tinged with gloom his student years. After he was elected, in 1822, Fellow of Oriel and had obtained the Chancellor's medal for Latin, he applied himself to the mastery of German. For the sake of perfecting himself in the language and acquainting himself with German theology, he spent some two years in that country. There he met Eichhorn, Tholuck, Schleiermacher, Neander, Freytag, Lücke, Sack; attended lectures at Göttingen, Berlin, Bonn; and came into touch with the romantic school, both in litera-

ture and religion. On his return from the continent, his first publication was an earnest defense of theological movements in Germany against the assaults of Rev. H. J. Rose, one of the Tractarians, in which he refers habitually to the reformed communions as churches, and speaks enthusiastically of the "immortal heroes, the mighty agents of the Reformation." About this time, 1827, therefore, he was infected with the current liberalism; but after his marriage, in 1828, with Maria Raymond-Barker, who was an ardent admirer of High Church principles, he gradually inclined more and more toward Newman and his friends. Captivated by the idea of a great, visible, organized church, and doubtless affected by the perils then besetting the English Establishment, he finally took sides with the Tractarian party. Of the value of his accession to the cause, Newman writes: "He at once gave to us a position and a name. Without him, we should have had no chance, especially at the early date of 1834, of making any serious resistance to the Liberal aggression. But Dr. Pusey was a Professor and Canon of Christ Church; he had a vast influence in consequence of his deep religious seriousness, the munificence of his charities, his professorship, his family connections, and his easy relations with University authorities." He contributed a tract on "Fasting," and then an elaborate treatise on "Baptism," in which the most extreme views of baptismal regeneration were advocated. This prepared the way for his teaching concerning confession and absolution. A sermon preached in 1843 on "The Holy Eucharist," which daringly approached to the Romish doctrine, led the authorities to forbid him the use of the university pulpit for

two years; but almost from this date he began to hear confessions, and the practice began to prevail as part of the Anglican system.

When Newman entered the Roman Church, it was generally supposed that Pusey would follow; but in this the world was disappointed. He remained behind and did what he could to conform the English Church to the medieval doctrines and practices of the Roman. Therefore, with the withdrawal of Newman, Pusey was left as sole head of the Anglo-Catholic medieval renaissance. He took "his position as the great spiritual teacher and preacher of the patristic revival." To what extent he carried his vocation may be inferred from a letter he wrote his friend Hope, afterward known as Hope-Scott, of Abbotsford, inquiring into the character of penances suitable for persons of delicate frames: "I see in a spiritual writer that even for such corporal severities are not safe to be neglected, but so many of them are unsafe. I suspect the 'discipline' to be one of the safest, and with internal humiliation the best. . . Could you procure and send me one by B.? What was described to me was of a very sacred character—five cords, each with five knots, in memory of the five wounds of our Lord."

This inquiry may be taken as an indication of the general character of the renaissance within the English Establishment. To all intents and purposes, it is simply a counterpart of what constitutes the distinguishing features of Roman Catholicism. Certainly in this way Cardinal Vaughan has interpreted it, and his words will fully sustain the conclusion I have reached. He expresses himself forcibly in these terms:

The very Establishment which was set up in rivalry to the church, with a royal supremacy—this very Establishment has changed its temper and attitude. Ministers and people are busily engaged in ignoring or denouncing those very Articles which were drawn up to be their eternal protest against the old religion. The sacramental power of orders, the need of jurisdiction, the Real Presence, the daily sacrifice, auricular confession, prayers and offices for the dead, belief in purgatory, the invocation of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, religious vows, and the institution of monks and nuns, . . all these are now openly proclaimed from a thousand pulpits in the Establishment, and as heartily embraced by as many crowded congregations.

That is, in England there is now taking place what Lord Falkland described as occurring in the same land some two hundred years ago, when certain bishops tried to see how papistical they could be without bringing in popery, and how far they could succeed in developing a blind dependence of the people upon the clergy.[1]

While from the lives of Newman and Pusey we have gained a fairly accurate conception of the two branches of the religious renaissance, it yet remains for us to observe the significant unfolding of the aims and purposes of the Anglo-Catholic branch as disclosed in its societies, confraternities, and secret orders. One of the most important of these bodies—perhaps the most important if numbers, piety, rank, and intelligence are accorded their due place—is the English Church Union, of which Lord Halifax is president. It contains in its membership twenty-nine bishops and over thirty-five thousand men, of whom at least four thousand two hundred are in the ministry. Among other striking documents it has issued an appeal for union with Rome; and at one of its

[1] Liddon, "Life of Pusey." Purcell, "Life of Cardinal Manning."

very latest gatherings it has formulated a strong protest against the right of the crown or of parliament "to determine the doctrine, the discipline, and the ceremonial of the Church of England," and declares that "we are not prepared to barter the principles of the church for the sake either of establishment or endowment." It further appeals to "the rulers of the church not to use their spiritual power to curtail the glory and splendor of the services of God's house by imposing on the church a narrow and disputed interpretation of the rubrics." From these excerpts we gather that the "Union" is more disposed to submit to the authority of the pope than to that of the "Lords temporal," and that it is not improbable the future may be startled by these unprotestant protesters joining with the dissenters in demanding disestablishment. This, at first, may seem incredible; but when it is remembered that this would be in accordance with the drift of the age and with the growing spirit of independence in many religious communities, it is not unlikely that it may be brought about, even at an early day in the twentieth century.

Another of these societies entitled to notice is called "The Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament," numbering upward of fifteen thousand members, of whom one thousand six hundred are in holy orders. This organization seeks to nullify that special repugnance to the Mass as expressed in the Thirty-first Article of the English Confession, "The Sacrifices of Masses, in which it was commonly said that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain and guilt, were blasphemous fables and dangerous conceits." Everything possible is being done by the

confraternity to educate the people in the contrary opinion, and to this end grants are made to poor parishes of altar vessels, chasuble, alb, tunicle, stole, and other accessories, the use of which has been by law declared illegal. It encourages prayers for the dead, and now holds a "solemn requiem," which is, in fact, an annual mass for the dead. These and other practices widen the breach between it and the simpler and truer faith of the old English Church. Of this, Bishop Samuel Wilberforce was convinced, and consequently thus addressed its superior general:

> It is sure to stir up a vast amount of prejudice from its singularly un-English and Popish tone. . . I view with the utmost jealousy any tendency to ally that reviving earnestness to the unrealities and morbid development of modern Romanism. You may do much one way or the other. I entreat you to consider the matter for yourself, and as bishop I exhort you to use no attempts to spread the Confraternity amongst the clergy and religious people of my diocese.

In addition to these bodies, there are orders of sisterhoods, orders of brotherhoods, the "Order of Corporate Reunion," the "Society of the Holy Cross," the "Secret Order of the Holy Redeemer," and even a "Purgatorial Order," whose names are sufficiently illuminative to save us from the labor of explanation. With all of these societies at work, and all working in the same direction, it will not surprise any one to learn that there are upward of one thousand two hundred churches in England where the medieval vestments are used, where incense and altar lights are employed, and where the ritual is not easily distinguishable from that usually followed in Roman Catholic churches. These innova-

tions or restorations have led to no small amount of debate and to some entreaties on the part of bishops to their clergy, which sound strange to those who understand the theory of priesthood to imply that it is the right of the superior to command and the duty of the inferior clergy to obey.

In recording these facts, I have, as far as possible, avoided the appearance of criticism; for I have been anxious merely to give an idea of a movement, which, in many respects, is the most notable of the century, and to do so candidly and dispassionately.

And then, what has been its outcome? What interests has it touched and modified? What transformations has it wrought? What are its results? What, its total value? These questions arise unbidden. Every thoughtful mind that considers this renaissance cannot refrain from demanding more than the mere outlines of its character.

It is manifest that a most remarkable change has taken place in the "tenets, practices, tastes," and temper of the Anglican communion. A French author, treating in a thoroughly admirable spirit this movement, by a very vivid contrast enables his readers at a glance to perceive the nature of this transition. He furnishes two aspects of the Establishment, one of the church as it was, and a companion picture of the church as it is. Let us bring these two portraits together; they are worthy of our attention. Here is the first:

> In vain did Anglicanism, therein differing from most Protestant communions, retain the external decoration of an episcopate: none the less for that had it lost the Catholic conception of the church, as a divine society founded by Christ, governed by a

hierarchy tracing back its descent to him, separate from and independent of all governments, having her own life in herself, with the right to rule herself and define her doctrine. The Established Church now appeared as no more than a creation of the State, entrusted by the State, under its own supremacy, with the department of religion and morals ; with her bishops appointed by the sovereign, her laws and even her dogmas settled by Parliament, her intestine disputes decided by the civil tribunals. Nothing resembling our clergy, with their celibacy, their ideal of renunciation, of asceticism, of supernatural mysticism ; nothing resembling our priests, marked and separated from the world by the priestly seal, invested with the ministry of sacrifice and absolution. The clergyman would have been astonished, and almost shocked, if one had called him "priest" ; married, busied with his family, living the life of every one else, be it as scholar or as squire, he looked upon himself as invested with a social function, which seemed to him not essentially different from any other, but which merely enjoined upon him a behavior somewhat more strict.

To this we may add another descriptive paragraph :

Inside and outside, everything "in the Established Church" had a thoroughly Protestant character. Further, if at that period one had asked an Anglican, cleric or layman, educated or ignorant, whether he were Protestant or Catholic, he would have thought the questioner was joking. Protestant he was, Protestant he was proud to be. Doubtless he well believed himself to have a Protestantism all his own, which, like all English wares, he thought superior to the wares of the same name in vogue upon the continent ; but the difference was merely one of quality, not of kind. The mere word Catholic conjured up before his eyes a conglomeration of superstitions, from which it was the very glory of his forefathers to have disengaged themselves three centuries before, and with which he could not possibly suppose himself to have anything in common.

Now, in contrast, we have this account :

Repeat that question ; to-day ask the Anglicans, of whom I speak, whether they are Catholics or Protestants : they will repudiate Protestantism with indignation, they will deem it an injustice and an injury to be called Protestants ; they will vindicate their right to call themselves Catholics, and will plume themselves upon having none but Catholic beliefs and practices. Far from being, like their predecessors, content to have a religion wholly English—after the manner of the ancient Hebrews, who could scarcely conceive of Jehovah except as belonging to themselves exclusively—they feel that religious truth cannot be so insular as all that ; they strive to persuade themselves that, despite the schism of the sixteenth century, in which they would fain see but an unfortunate and transitory mishap, they remain still a branch of the Catholic Church ; they assert that, notwithstanding everything, there subsists a kind of immaterial unity. They show themselves far from proud of the alleged reformers, whom they encounter at the very cradle of their church. Sometimes they even openly confess their crime, and, in any case, appear above all things preoccupied with tracing their origin to an earlier source, more anxious to connect themselves with St. Gregory the Great and with St. Augustine of Canterbury, than with Henry VIII. and Cranmer.[1]

But, on this subject, the most trustworthy testimony has just been published from the pen of eminent churchmen themselves, whose names are a sufficient guaranty of their ability and candor. The volume they have issued is called "Church and Faith," and its contents have been supplied by Dr. Wace, Dean Farrar, Dr. Wright, Professor Moule, Rev. R. E. Bartlett, Principal Drury, Canon Meyrick, Chancellor Smith, Montague Barlow, Sir Richard Temple, E. H. Blakeney, I. T. Tomlinson, with an introduction from the pen of the

[1] "*La Renaissance Catholique en Angleterre au XIXe. Siècle. Première Partie : Newman et le Mouvement d'Oxford.*" *Par Paul Thureau-Dangin, de l'Academie Française.*

Lord Bishop of Hereford. Here we have, as it were, an authoritative statement of the revolution that has been wrought within the church, and a clear idea of the line of cleavage that divides the ritualists from their brethren. The bishop says that the ritualists are aiming

> To wipe out the Protestant character of the Church of England, and to revive under the vague and consequently misleading name of Catholic, the church of the darker ages, with its rule of sacerdotal authority over the individual conscience, its encouragement of the confessional, its doctrine of the mass, its baseless dogmas about the state of the dead, and its imposing, symbolic, and spectacular worship.

But it is argued that, while these representatives of what has taken place may be accepted as authentic, it must not be overlooked that what these churchmen criticise has tended, on the whole, to the advantage of Christendom :

> The unbroken continuity of the English Church, the existence of a divinely constituted ecclesiastical polity, the importance of the Eucharist as the central act of Christian worship, the appeal of religion to the senses and emotions—these have been the incentives to a religious enthusiasm which strikingly contrasts with the deadness of the Reformed bodies abroad.[1]

Of the enthusiasm, there is no doubt ; and it has not exhausted itself, either on ceremonials and rubrics, on church restorations and antiquities, but has expressed itself in philanthropies, benefactions, college settlements, and Christian socialism.

These latter endeavors, however, in my opinion, are due rather to the initiative of the Broad Church school,

[1] Jennings, " Manual Church Hist.," Vol. II., p. 227.

represented by Kingsley and Maurice, than to the humanitarianism of the High ; confirmation of which we seem to have in the fact that Nonconformists in England and elsewhere have been just as active, self-sacrificing, and diligent in good works as their contemporaries of the Establishment. When we remember that, where sacerdotal systems have prevailed most absolutely, the social condition of the masses has been most shameful, it follows logically that the new solicitude on their behalf cannot be due to a revival of sacerdotalism, especially as it prevails when sacerdotalism is rejected, but to the *Zeit-geist*, which, in this instance, I may be excused for identifying in a very real if not complete sense with the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit. Without detracting in the least from the part taken by the Anglo-Catholics in the work being done for social amelioration, we are unable to give them credit exclusively or primarily for its origin or vigor. They have accomplished much, but not everything. They have unquestionably outstripped their predecessors in the church ; but they have not excelled their contemporaries who dissent from the church.

It is also clear that the Episcopal hierarchy in England has gained in the love and confidence of the nation. Whether this is to be attributed to its increasing sensuous splendor, or to its enlarging sympathy with the temporal needs of the people, is not easy to determine. Probably both tendencies ought to be recognized, though I apprehend that hungry and neglected multitudes will be more readily moved by the latter than by the former. And it is to be noted that as the English Church has grown in favor, the Roman Catholic worship has become

more and more tolerable. This is very likely to be explained by the secession to that fellowship of many genuine Englishmen, thus toning down the foreign aspect of Romanism, and by the practical endeavors of ecclesiastics, like those of Cardinal Manning on behalf of the dock-yard strikers, to abate the sufferings of the poor. In other words, it is apparent that the renaissance of medieval Catholicism has acquired much of its popularity from its benevolent labors. It has to a considerable degree espoused the cause of the poor and wretched, and, in so doing, it is entitled to the world's gratitude and admiration.

Principal Fairbairn, in discussing the changes effected by the Anglo-Catholic movement, says that, "its ideal of worship has modified the practice of all the churches, even of those most hostile to its ideal of religion." He adds, further:

> The religious spirit of England is, in all its sections and varieties, sweeter to-day than it was forty years ago, more open to the ministries of art and the graciousness of order, possessed of a larger sense of the communion of saints, the kinship and continuity of the Christian society of all ages. Even Scotland has been touched with a strange softness, Presbyterian worship has grown less bald, organs and liturgies have found a home in the land and church of Knox.[1]

All of which is undoubtedly true, and yet there are some shadows to this attractive picture. There is an uneasy feeling in Scotland that the liturgical business is being overdone, and that the Church of the Covenant has not been improved spiritually by the spectacular features which have of late been added to her worship. Open-

[1] "Catholicism, Roman and Anglican," p. 73.

ness to art is all very well, and beauty and music are in themselves desirable; but when there is an attempted imitation of Anglo-Catholics in Nonconformist meeting-houses, and when officiating Protestant ministers in cathedral tones speak of the "Holy Eucharist" and vaguely talk of "rites magical to sanctify," they are perhaps unintentionally but really betraying the cause of the Reformation into the hands of its enemies. Moreover, while it would be ungracious to say that English religious life, on the whole, has not grown sweeter, it must be admitted there is much room for it to become sweeter still. The rancorous discussions within the church herself, between the Romanizing and the anti-Romanizing factions, and the acerbity of newspaper disputants, and the uproarious and violent demonstrations in sacred edifices against candles and incense in divine service, leave much in the way of sweetness to be desired. While there has been a *rapprochement* in the way of gentle courtesies between the priests of Anglicanism and those of Catholicism, there has been scarcely any diminution in narrow hostility on the part of High Churchmen toward Dissenters. There are many notable exceptions to this proscriptive spirit among the higher and lower clergy of the establishment; but they are rarely found within the circle of those who are tainted with Romanism. To them all Dissenters are outside barbarians. They assume a patronizing air when they allude to them, and are arrogantly supercilious when they meet them, and denounce as flagrantly iniquitous the parliamentary laws which concede to the children of Dissent the rights of burial in the cemeteries of the nation. Their contemptuous

attitude toward the Nonconformist bodies, whose loyalty to conscience and devotion to the nation made Britain strong and great, is illustrated by the depreciatory allusion to their standing from the pen of a modern church historian.

This ecclesiastical annalist thus represents them :

> The chief factors of the sects are the lower-middle classes, nor, save in the case of new phases of pietistic enthusiasm, have they found much favor with men of education. An exception to this rule is furnished by the Unitarian body, which has long maintained a high intellectual character.

So, then, the "rule is" that Nonconformists are uneducated and are not favored by educated people ; and yet, strange to say, all over the world, including England, they have been foremost in laboring and sacrificing for the enlightenment of mankind. What does this reverend traducer mean ? Does he mean that the average intelligence of the chapel is not so high as that of the church ? If he does, it is purely an assumption, born of his clerical prejudices. Does he desire to be understood as intimating that the pulpits of Nonconformity are not adorned by men of equal ability and scholarship with those who serve the Establishment ? If he does, then he is not acquainted with the facts, or he is disposed to ignore them. Perhaps he does not know that the Christian world extends beyond the British Islands, and that, in the United States, Episcopacy constitutes a very meagre portion of its Christianity. While presumably that honored Episcopacy has done its part in the great work of education, the non-prelatical bodies have, as they ought to have done, contributed

immeasurably more than it could have contributed toward the founding of schools and the increase of colleges. Nor is it in the spirit of disparagement of others that I add that "the sects," as they are superciliously termed, have given as many brilliant teachers and preachers to the world as their more pretentious rivals. Nor is this without parallel in England itself. Bishop Watson, in a letter to the archbishop of Canterbury, 1783, writes concerning Dissenting preachers, "I cannot look upon them as inferior to the clergy of the Establishment, either in learning or morals." And another unprejudiced churchman wrote: "As a member and minister of the universal church of Christ, I dare not to be so ungrateful to the Dissenting body as to forget their past and present services to the general cause of Christianity. Many of their community have shone, in their respective eras, as the light and glory of the Catholic Church." The author from whom I am quoting reminds us that Bishop Warburton, one of the greatest masters of learning, attended no university; and that Archbishop Secker and Bishop Butler were the offspring of Dissenters and were educated by a Nonconformist minister. If these gracious things can be said of Dissenters in the past, they can be said with even more truth of them to-day. Many of the most eminent men of letters in England during this century, and many of its most brilliant theologians, were not born in the Establishment, did not believe in the Establishment, and did not minister at its altars; and it is the weakness of the extreme Anglo-Catholic party, that it is apparently unwilling to recognize greatness and scholarship beyond its own circle. Nay, it seems to have intensified intolerance

and religious provincialism ; and in this manner it has disfigured much that is refreshing and inspiring in its ideals. If we judge by the tone and spirit of the two historians we have cited, the English Church, just to the extent that it has yielded to the Romanizing factors in its midst, has declined in kindly charity and in that sweetness which ought to predominate in the relations and intercourse of all creeds and communions.[1]

Nor is this the only evil tendency traceable to the Oxford Movement. It is largely responsible for the prevalence of sensationalism in the methods of religious work and the forms of religious address. Nothing is more common in our day than to hear ritualistic clergymen speak, with something like sneering compassion in their voice, of preachers who choose startling themes to draw a congregation ; of evangelists who evoke the power of music and do not disdain occasionally to sanctify a concert-hall melody ; and of Salvation Armies, who with drum and trumpet and cheap scarlet uniform attempt to awaken the sleeping world. All these things, to the High Anglo-Catholic, are very meretricious, very theatrical, very vulgar, and very unworthy the cause of religion. We are disposed to agree with him. Better far if Christianity could dispense with such aids. Far better would it be if sanctified learning and tempered enthusiasm, if dignity and zeal, and if "sweet reasonableness" and passionate love could always be combined in the preacher and in his message ; and far better would it be if blemishes on revival efforts were removed, and the same results in the slums of our cities could be reached

[1] Jennings, "Manual of Church Hist.," Vol. II., p. 229 ; Timson, "Church History," p. 437.

without the employment of an agency into which the grotesque element enters so conspicuously. But who are they who criticise? Is there nothing spectacular and sensational in their system? Nay, is it not of its very essence theatrical? These priests, with garments belonging to other ages and having their origin in other cults; these services, in which mysterious genuflections and cabalistic signs appeal to superstitious instincts; these processionings, with their incense, chanting, and spangled, painted pageantry—what are these things if not the very melodrama of religion? There is the same appeal to the eye and ear, the same illusion and phantasmagoria, the endeavor to charm and thrill that enters so largely into the *mise en scène* of the stage; and when stately ecclesiastics, staid professors of theology, and university men attach so much importance to every detail of such histrionic and dramaturgical worship, is it not readily explicable why some preachers and reformers adopt, according to their poor resources, methods so strained and unnatural as at times to border on burlesque? They are simply doing, within their sphere and in harmony with their limitations, what dignitaries of the church are doing with greater lavishness and display. Had there not been so remarkable a revival of the sensuous and scenic among those who assume to be exceptionally cultured and to be pre-eminently qualified to be religious leaders, it is very doubtful whether there would have been anything of that sensationalism which has found its way into some of the activities of Protestantism. Without the mummeries of extreme ritualism, there would have been scarcely anything, if anything at all, of the harlequinade of excitable evangelism; but given

the one, and the other was almost inevitable; but both are to be deplored.

They alike suggest to the thoughtful observer the ominous prevalence of romanticism in religion. Seeing so much that is artificial, fictitious, and extravagant on the surface, he is not surely to be blamed if he at least wonders whether these things are characteristic of Christianity down into the depths. What every honest heart primarily desires in religion is veraciousness, reality, not show and illusion. It desires solid rock for a foundation, not flowers for ornamentation, especially not the muslin and wax flowers of the milliner. And when it is called on to believe as historical the assumptions and fatuities of apostolic succession, which are about as credible as would be the theory of a "Salvationist" who should insist on tracing the "army" through a long line of fighting Christians back to St. Paul, as that apostle in particular charged Timothy, his successor, to "fight a good warfare"; and when it is called on to accept the contradictions involved in the mass, to the validity of which this apostolic succession is deemed necessary, and for the offering of which there is not a single instance in apostolic literature, it may well question whether, after all, the romanticism apparent in the service is not a sure sign of romanticism in the very essence of the faith. The renaissance of medieval Catholicism is responsible for this growing skepticism, which can only be met and counteracted by a return on the part of both churchmen and evangelicals to the sweeter, saner, simpler, and more genuine ways of the primitive saints. When we are all unwilling to disfigure the worship of God by the sensationalisms of ritualism, and the sensa-

tionalism of operatic choirs and extravaganza preachers, then the world will be able to discern more clearly the infinite realities which it is designed to actualize to the spiritual nature of man.

From the character of this renaissance, it would seem that it ought to have exercised a decisive influence on literature and art. As might have been expected, it has quickened solicitude for the preservation of ancient cathedrals, and probably it has had something to do with the improvement noticeable in church architecture; but Principal Fairbairn rates its effects on the world of letters in depreciatory terms, reminding us that neither of the two great English poets of the century,—Tennyson and Browning,—while eminently religious, was fascinated and governed by Anglo-Catholic ideals, while Arthur Clough, Matthew Arnold, and William Morris, who, from their relations with Oxford, ought to have been accessible to the new spirit, turned to other sources for their inspiration.[1] And Max Nordau has not so much to say for its creative power in the realm of art. To its influence he traces the rise of the pre-Raphaelite brotherhood, with which Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Holman Hunt, Millais, Stephens, Collinson, and Thomas Woolner were associated; and of these eminent men he writes in the most delirious invective conceivable.[2] Posterity will not approve his findings and will assuredly reverse his judgment. Whatever may be their defects, and though they may have yielded too absolutely to the genius of Cimabue and Giotto, "the renaissance of medieval feeling" embodied in their works will ever appeal to the culti-

[1] "Catholicism, Roman and Anglican," p. 313.
[2] "Degeneration," Chap. II.

vated mind and the devout spirit. Every school of art has its limitations; but on that account to be blind to merit is only an indication of narrower limits in the critic, which disqualify him for his task. But the romantic painters, however distinguished, illustrate the natural scope and bearing of romanticism in religion. Art is its natural, if not its necessary, product. It depends on pictures, show, music, and the sensuous refinements which are so grateful to æsthetic tastes, if not to exalted piety. What action, then, can be more normal than its appeal to the imagination, and what more inevitable than that it should stimulate the creative imagination? It is not surprising, therefore, that the Anglo-Catholic movement should have influenced art and should have made the people of England more amenable to the gracious ministry of the beautiful. And if we could only believe that this ministry was really conducive to the spiritual life as it is revealed in the character of Jesus, and if it were only true that it tended to deliver men and women from sensuous indulgences and nerved them to heroic and self-sacrificing service on behalf of virtue, we should entertain less doubt of the permanent advantage to mankind of the Catholic revival.

Probably there are sanguine spirits that are expecting, from the prominence given to this revival in numerous volumes and from the mighty claims put forth by its leaders and supporters, that it is destined to swallow up dissent and finally establish itself triumphantly on the ruined thrones of discredited faiths. But there is little justification in facts for such dreams as these. There are signs that the inevitable reaction has already commenced and that the Catholic renaissance has

been more than checked. Never have stronger protests been uttered than have been given to the public of late against any further Romanizing of the English Church; and never has a more determined opposition been organized against such innovations than has made itself felt during recent years. The note of alarm has been sounded, and evangelical Christendom has been roused to unusual enthusiasm on behalf of the Protestant principle. But the fate of the Catholic movement within the Anglican Establishment may be judged by the present apparent arrest of papal power and influence; for if the very seat and throne of its strength be shaken, it cannot be guaranteed an assuring future. Of the Eternal City, it used to be said, "When Rome falls, the world falls"; but it may with greater confidence be predicted that when Rome sacerdotal crumbles and decays, all the little ecclesiastical Romes will rapidly share her fate. And that this process has commenced a variety of tokens indicate. In nearly all Catholic countries there is an intellectual revulsion from the assumptions of the dominant faith. "In Belgium, the conflict is going on under our very eyes, political on the surface, religious beneath it; in Italy, where thought is most active, the claims and dogmas of the church are handled most freely; even in Spain, political aspirations are wedded to ecclesiastical denials."[1] France witnesses a similar antagonism, only characterized by more bitterness and vindictiveness. The very priesthood in France has been suffering serious losses, some of its recruits and even some of its members abandoning their vocation and renouncing their vows. An English paper

[1] Fairbairn, "Catholicism, Roman and Anglican," p. 69.

writes: "A deep unrest, according to the '*Chrétien Français*,' pervades the ranks of the lower clergy in France, and a learned priest, M. l'Abbé Harrent, in a letter of resignation he has just sent in to his bishop, describes the situation thus: 'You will not think it strange that, myself loyal, laborious, and independent, I am quitting a world of hypocrisy and idleness, in whose lower ranks reigns servility, and in whose upper an odious arbitrariness.' According to the 'Cologne Gazette,' in the Commune Lichtenwald, all Roman Catholics, except five, have gone over to the Evangelical Church. In Hungary the Protestant movement also makes rapid progress, in one commune alone eighty families having seceded from Rome; and at Gablonz the Reformed Church has received an accession of seven hundred persons during the past year." A Lamennais is charmed from the ancient altar by "new political ideals"; a Renan is driven by the unhistorical Christ of the Romish Church to create a sentimental Christ of romance; while the Abbé Bourrier, Abbé Charbonnel, the curé of Arabaux, M. Vidalot, the ex-priest, M. Philippot, and a host of other clerics, have recently gone over to Protestantism. Of this exodus, Bourrier writes:

> Yes, I affirm it . . . that there is to-day in France, among the Catholic clergy, a great lassitude and disgust, an immense aspiration after reform, after a primitive Christianity, after a genuine gospel renewal. What is to be done? French Protestantism, it is clear, has a great and glorious mission to fulfill. As a depository of the gospel among an ignorant and pagan multitude, it is like the small nation of Israel charged to guard the world's hope and faith till the day of illumination.[1]

[1] "Rome From the Inside," p. 12.

And among the laity, this dissatisfaction has been intensified by what is known as the Americanist controversy, and by some recent decisions of the Roman congregations, and by the encouragement given in high ecclesiastical quarters to the odious form of hysteria called Anti-Semitism, as in the Dreyfus case. Signals of distress are also flying in several directions, indicating that the Catholic ship is sorely strained, if not foundering. One writer declares that—

> It is becoming more and more difficult to fill the vacant places in the priesthood. There are seminaries where the number of the seminarists decrease every year. Enthusiasm grows less, while the obstacles to obeying the call become greater. Consequently, many dioceses and parishes suffer and are on the point of falling away altogether for want of spiritual directors, and the bishop has often to put several parishes under the care of one priest.[1]

Another Catholic author, referring to the priest, says :

> He seems to be afraid of dealing with men during their lifetime, so leaves them to themselves, hoping that when they come to die he will have the chance of bringing them to the fold. He is more anxious for them to die in a becoming manner than that they should live good lives.[2]

And from other sources we gather these additional and significant items. It is asserted that, in many cases "the bishop has no influence in his diocese, nor the curé in his parish, and there is no concerted action between one diocese and another." Moreover, "the time when the church was a regiment marching in step is now only a memory." "The priest will no more sub-

[1] "*L'Educateur-Apôtre*,' by Guibert, Direct. Seminary of Issy.
[2] "*Le Clergé Français en 1890.*"

mit to the orders of the bishop than to the encyclicals of the pope. They cant; they interpret; and their everlasting discussions paralyze all effort." Besides, priests who are clever, active, and independent are becoming more and more rare. Indeed, "the bishops put aside mercilessly candidates who are suspected of independence or firmness." [1] "The priests, on their side, hate those bishops who are weak and pliable. They protest against their power of judgment, and the least timid claim that the post to be filled should be put up to competition, so that the good livings should not fall always into the hands of the most designing, but sometimes into the hands of the most capable." [2]

These representations are ominous; and, as though they were not sufficient, even so ardent a friend as Mr. W. S. Lilly, takes quite a pessimistic view of what is coming, though he tries to make the best of a forlorn hope. He says: "I see no prospect that the Catholic Church will again hold the position in Europe that she held in the Middle Ages; that the pope will once more occupy the great international office assigned him in canon law. But it is well conceivable that in the new age, which is even now upon us, the pontiff's moral influence will be of unparalleled greatness, as from his seat by the tomb of the apostles he surveys his ecumenical charge, and

> "Listening to the inner flow of things,
> Speak to the ages out of eternity;

reproving the world of sin, of righteousness, and judg-

[1] "*Aperçu sur la Situation de la Religion et du Clergé en France.*"
[2] "*Compte Rendu du Congrès de Reims.*"

ment, maintaining the divine testimonies before kings and democracies."[1] But this enthusiastic vision will scarcely be acceptable to Leo XIII., who, with the entire ultramontane party, is anxious to be repossessed of the States of the church, and to exercise an influence vastly different from what seems so glorious to Mr. Lilly. But, according to this author, the hopes of the supreme pontiff are vain; and reading further, it would seem that his own rest on very slim foundations, as he acknowledges that the great masters of literature, from Goethe until now, are, on the whole, "alien from Catholicism, if not opposed to it," and if they are, it is not likely that the new age will feel the benignant sway of Mr. Lilly's new and inconceivable papacy.

Nor are the prospects, as viewed from the practical standpoint of statistics, brighter or more assuring. The recent book of Dr. Joseph Müller, entitled "*Der Reformkatholizismus*," has created great consternation in Catholic circles, as has that of Professor Schell, "*Der Katholizismus als Prinzip des Fortschritts*," and both are of inestimable value to the student who desires to understand the religious movements of the nineteenth century. According to Müller, in 1895, eighteen thousand persons in Prussia passed from the Catholic to the Protestant communions as against two thousand from the Protestant to the Catholic. In Saxony, twenty-five per cent. of the children of mixed marriages embrace the Reform faith. Between 1872 and 1891, in the diocese of Cologne, the Catholic population increased forty-two per cent., while that of Protestantism increased eighty-four per cent. This writer also lays stress on the in-

[1] See "The Great Enigma" and "Claims of Christianity."

feriority of Romanists in education, and consequently in social standing; in the higher schools throughout the German States the relative proportion attending being given as one Catholic to two Protestants. Nothing can be more disastrous to a cause, however venerable, than this failure to keep pace with the growing enlightenment of the times; for every church will, in the long run, have to take account of this increasing intelligence.[1] If it is supposed that this decline on the continent of the Old World is more than balanced by the gains in England and the New, Dr. Dorchester's volume on "The Problem of Religious Progress," will speedily dispel any such illusion. He proves that "Roman Catholicism has not been progressive in England for about a quarter of a century." The Oxford movement had practically been arrested by 1875,—that is, at least, so far as numerous secessions from the Anglican Church to Romanism is concerned; and yet, with the influx of wealth and distinguished people during the first half of the century, the Catholics in England barely numbered a million in 1877.[2] Dr. Dorchester also shows that, in the various provinces that make up the Dominion of Canada, the Romanist communion has been relatively losing and not gaining. The situation may be summed up in the sentence: "Instead of only ten Protestants to sixty-five Romanists, as in 1765, there are now twenty-six Protestant to nineteen Roman Catholics."[3] And in the United States, the increase of Roman Catholics has not equaled the number of Catholic immigrants from beyond the sea. 'The Roman Catholic

[1] See London "Spectator," Oct. 21, 1899, p. 564.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 544. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 550.

immigrants from all countries, and their offspring during the past forty years, must have amounted to full ten millions, making no account of those here prior to 1880 and their descendants. But their Year-Book for 1891 gives the total Catholic population, eight million five hundred and seventy-nine thousand nine hundred and sixty-six,[1] illustrating the common impression that "this country is the biggest grave for popery ever dug on earth." This survey may fittingly be closed with a few suggestive figures, which demonstrate that, however wonderful and extensive the renaissance of medieval Catholicism may have been, it has not progressed so amazingly as the Reformation has advanced from the sixteenth century to the dawning of the twentieth: "Romanism, starting in the year 1500 on a basis of about eighty millions, has not quite doubled, while the total population of Europe has increased three-and-a-half-fold, and Protestantism, starting nominally from unity, has gained eighty-seven million nine hundred and twenty-five thousand one hundred and thirty-nine, which is thirteen million three hundred and fifty-six thousand nine hundred and eighty more than the total gain of Romanism."[2]

Thus, then, we have reached the existing boundaries of romanticism in modern religion. We have followed its rise in our times, have traced its advance, and have been brought to what seems to be its limitations. Whether these will ever be passed, it is not easy to foresee, and certainly it would not be wise, without additional light, to predict. Classicism in the beautiful

[1] See London "Spectator," Oct. 21, 1899, pp. 584–5.

[2] Dorchester, p. 528.

gardens of the Medici at Florence, fostering philosophy, poetry, and art, may ambitiously have anticipated a day when the entire world would be governed by its ideals and spirit; and yet its children and heroes, Poliziano, Filippo, Brunelleschi, Michelangelo, Rustici, Donatello, Francesco Bandini, and the other celebrated men who rendered famous the villa at Careggi, appeared upon the scene, wrought their work, faded from human vision, while the leafy groves withered and the cause they represented lost much of its unique and distinctive character. But while the literary renaissance found its limitations and was to be modified and generalized by other tendencies, there was much that it denoted and more that it produced of priceless value, which was destined to survive and permanently to influence the course of civilization. Thus it may be with the modern revival of Catholicism. Its special forms, its peculiar institutions, its stereotyped expressions, its narrowing theories of religion, and its provincialism scarcely hidden under its clamorous asseverations of universality, may go the way of other perishable elements; and yet it may bequeath to the coming ages exalted conceptions and ennobling examples. Succeeding generations may translate its materialistic and sensuous speech into the language of spirit; and in the transformation there may rise to bless mankind a sublimer type of Christianity than pontiffs in their imaginings of world-wide dominion ever painted, or ecclesiastics in their most elaborate and gorgeous ceremonials ever dreamed of symbolizing.

IV

THE SEERS AND SAGES

Are there no wrongs of nations to redress;
No misery-frozen scenes of wretchedness;
No orphans, homeless, staining with their feet
The very flagstones of the wintry street;
No broken-hearted daughters of despair,
Forlornly beautiful, to be your care?
Is there no hunger, ignorance, or crime?
Oh, that the prophet-bards of old, sublime,
That grand Isaiah and his kindred just
Might rouse ye from your slavery to the dust!

—*T. L. Harris*

IV

THE NEW PROPHETISM IN MODERN LITERATURE

The governing spirit of an age will always, directly or indirectly, find its truest and most genuine expression in its literature. From the interest taken in the poems of Homer, from the representations of popular mythology on the stage, and from the criticism of current politics in the comic drama, we gain a very faithful picture of the habits and institutions of the Athenians. Thus, also, we obtain an idea of the ancient agriculture of Rome from the "Georgics," and of her imperial greatness from the "Æneid," and of her wasteful dissoluteness from the writings of Juvenal. And the same is true of every era since the decline of Greek and Latin culture. Books hold up a mirror to the times, in which may be traced their likeness. Therein may be discerned not only their social, industrial, and national lineaments, but the distinctive characteristics of their religious life as well; and as literature, pure and simple, is not supposed to yield to prejudice, and as it occupies a position so detached from the debates of parties as to be favorable to a world-wide view, it may furnish us with a more trustworthy report of our spiritual tendencies than may be supplied by technical theological discussions or by so-called scientific ecclesiastical histories. Of this, Carlyle could have had little doubt when he penned these striking lines: "'But there is no religion,' reiterates the Professor. 'Fool! I tell thee there is. Hast thou well

considered all that lies in this immeasurable froth-stream we name Literature? Fragments of a genuine Church Homiletic lie scattered there, which Time will assort: nay, fractions even of a Liturgy could I point out now.'" It is to this religious element in literature that we apply the descriptive title, Prophetism.

Originally, the priests were the instructors of the people, and not merely their intercessors. While their primary function was to plead for them with God, and on their behalf to offer gifts and sacrifices, they were also empowered to expound the meaning of the law and teach the generations its principles of righteousness.[1] Unhappily they did not prove themselves equal to their august responsibility, and in the times of the judges their degeneracy was so marked that a new moral order was evoked. The ancient prophets came into existence with the selection of Samuel, and almost from the beginning they seem to have discerned the weakness of sacerdotalism, and to have antagonized its representatives. They are distinguished by an intense passion for righteousness and by an unwavering confidence in monotheism. Over and above ritual they exalt morality, and beyond holiness they extol righteousness. Hosea exclaims: "I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."[2] Amos, on behalf of God, says: "I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts."[3] And Micah sums up the sublime message of his order in the classic

[1] Lev. 10 : 11. [2] Hosea 6 : 6. [3] Amos 5 : 21, 22.

utterance: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"[1] These men were remarkable for their sincerity in times when deceit and hypocrisy had invaded the temple; they were conspicuous for their patriotism when priests had degenerated into shifty politicians and were ready to seek alliances with the alien; they were singular in their spirituality when Levites were perturbed and solicitous about altar regulations and the number and dignity of sacrifices; and they were exceptional in their ardent desire for light and in their abundant labors for the enlightenment of the world, when kings, great captains, and mitred rulers were willing that the nation should grope in darkness and perish for lack of knowledge. From them mankind has received the sacred literature of the Hebrews. They were its authors. The "*Bibliotheca Divina*," as Jerome named the collected Scriptures in the fourth century, constitute an imperishable memorial of religious experience and development during the periods covered by their annals; and what to us is particularly noteworthy, they were not prepared by high priests, by ecclesiastics of authority, nor by venerable councils or stately commissions, but by inspired men, often having no official relation to the established system of religion, and receiving no license or ordination from its chief representatives to speak, and frequently being chosen by God in the most extraordinary fashion, as an Elijah called from among the outcasts and outlaws of Gilead, or an Amos summoned from the herdsmen of Tekoa.

[1] Micah 6: 8.

If the prophet has any lineal successor, it is unquestionably the gospel preacher or evangelist; but unfortunately, in a number of instances, he has no clear perception of his vocation. He is always in danger of being dazzled by sacerdotal functions and pretensions, and of surrendering his higher mission as teacher for the empty show of priestly authority. To purify the conscience through the truth is a much more ennobling task than to exorcise the evil by forms and superstitions; to really enlighten the soul is surely a worthier endeavor than to pretend to absolve it; and to move the guilty heart to penitence is far more elevating than to impose on it torturing penances. But the analogy between the prophet and the preacher in modern life fails at another point. The preacher, unlike the prophet, has a recognized standing in a church, has been tested and examined by a group of officials, who, in a very real sense, determine his message for him, and is usually the product of theological school and seminary. He is thus, as the prophet was not, a part of a system, pledged more or less to stereotyped forms of doctrines as the ancient priest was to stereotyped rubrics, to depart from which in either case is regarded as disloyalty to solemn vows. Consequently, he frequently lacks in spontaneity, in freedom, and that openness of soul which made his prototype the receptacle of heavenly visions and the channel of divine revelations. There have been, and there are, notable exceptions to this deficiency; and when they occur, we have within the church living approximations to what the old prophets were, if not in those miraculous gifts which were necessarily temporary in their nature, at least in those endowments and

spiritual qualities which were of permanent value. But as ministers of the gospel do not always evince these qualities, and as the old prophets were not, in the same sense as the priests were, officially related to what was essentially a church, it seems as though in our times, beyond ecclesiastical circles and professional ministries, God may have an order of men, who, though not like the prophets in their supernatural powers, resemble them in their high calling as the interpreters of spiritual mysteries and as the heralds of hope to long-suffering races.

It seems to me that this order is disclosed most vividly and unmistakably in the loftier and purer elevations of modern literature. Not that I am restricting its manifestations arbitrarily to the last hundred years: for I know very well that it can be detected in the awful Nemesis proclaimed by the tragic muse of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides; and in the admonitions and dreams of Piers Plowman; and in the Utopia visited by Raphael Hythloday and duly chronicled by veracious Sir Thomas More; and in the apocalyptic poems of Dante; and in the matchless plays of Shakespeare, wherein the supernatural world haunts the steps of Hamlet and Macbeth, wherein the moral world asserts itself in the fate of Shylock, Richard, and Iago, and where the human world, in all its littleness and greatness, appears in its Henrys, its Woolseys, its Hotspurs, its Falstaffs, its Katharines, its Audreys, and its Lears. Still, the number of these teachers is relatively small, and they are widely separated in time. They are as solitary voices crying out here and there in the wilderness of history. Not until the closing years of the last

century, and throughout the course of this, do we observe a distinct tendency and accumulation of voices, or, in other words, an unexampled development of prophetism in literature.

But this is not merely exceptional in amount; it is unique in character. The higher truths of theology have become the subject-matter of poems; transcendental philosophies which touch the very core of religion have been illuminated in stately verse; the deeper mysteries of spiritual being have been made the theme of essay, epic, and romance; while a thing unheard of by our sires has occurred so frequently as now to have lost its strangeness—the issues between Christianity and infidelity, and the debatable phases of Christianity itself, have been transferred to the pages of fiction, and these imaginary creations discuss in the presence of commonplace readers questions most vital to the world's faith, and which, in the olden times, would only have been touched by venerable professors of theology. To this movement there is a very significant side. There is a more or less strident cry against the introduction of doctrinal subjects into the pulpit; and yet, while the preacher is warned not to discuss higher criticism, his parishioner is greedily devouring Robert Elsmere; and while he is urged not to say anything about the future life and the doctrines of grace, David Elginbrod and Robert Falconer are quietly undermining the faith of his people. He wonders why the novel is so popular, and why the sermon seems unattractive. Perhaps if he would more frequently disdain advice, and fasten the attention of his congregation on the more massive and enduring conceptions of religion, he would not have to

bemoan empty pews and listless hearers. I say this without designing to class Mrs. Humphry Ward, or George Macdonald either, with the prophets. Whether they and others of their rank and type belong to this order or not, it is not necessary here to determine. I mention them simply as a sign of what is peculiar to this age—that religious questions are being debated and determined outside of the church, which is an indication of the large place religion has come to occupy in the literature of the century and in the thought of mankind.

To prevent misconception, it may be well to explain that prophetism does not always carry with it the assurance of personal blamelessness. Balaam gave expression to some beautiful thoughts and obtained a wonderful insight into God's dealings with Israel, and yet his character was such that no one has ever ventured to canonize him. We all cherish his message and see in it the marks of heavenly inspiration; but we are not fascinated by the messenger. The conduct of some other prophets whose names are enrolled in the Bible is also not beyond reproach. It will not, therefore, amaze us if we discover that some among the great writers of our own times, who have discoursed eloquently and searchingly of the deep things of creation and providence, have been harsh, censorious, bigoted, or vain, and sometimes even of flexible virtue. While many of them, let us say the majority, have been men and women of integrity and purity, there have been black sheep in the flock. We do not extenuate their foibles and frailties, and in quoting from them do not mean to approve all of their ethical distinctions, and are sure they would have given forth a sweeter music if the reed had not been bruised;

and yet it is for us to learn that God can awaken some harmonious sounds, even through a damaged instrument, and even though at times they may be accompanied by certain moral dissonances. We are bound to discriminate. Deflections from virtue we ought to condemn, and the children of genius are no more to be exonerated than the children of mediocrity. We could hope that all of them in future would imitate John Milton in his view of the mission to which he was called of God. A most interesting account of the feelings that moved him and the principles that governed him in taking up his pen has been furnished by an eminent English scholar, and is worthy of being cited here:

> Though Milton declined the priestly function in the English Church, he was not, in his own conception, the less a priest on that account. The priesthood to which he aspired was the bardic priesthood. The inspiration he sought was that which had come upon the old prophets—an inspiration which might come upon them as laymen but which raised them to a level with the most sacred themes. In his apprehension, a poet of the order which he hoped to be must be a consecrated man. The singer of bacchanalian songs may be himself bacchanalian, but a poet who would ascend to things celestial must not be of the earth, earthy. The evil inseparable from our nature may qualify him to depict evil; but if he is to make men feel how awful goodness is, he must have striven hard toward those higher regions of being where goodness rules. In all art the truly religious element must come from religious men. Genius without sanctity may touch the ark, but it will be but to profane it. However much at home in other regions, if the special faculty for this region be wanting, success will be wanting. In art, as in religion, the natural man does not discern spiritual things.[1]

When this great example is not followed, we should

[1] Robert Vaughan, D. D., "Life of Milton."

be free to rebuke iniquity; but we never should be oblivious to the service rendered mankind by the new prophetism, even when the standard has not been so high. It has conveyed religious truths to millions whom the church has been powerless to reach; it has sometimes rendered these truths more attractive, more transparent and acceptable to ordinary understandings than they have been made in the usual course of pulpit teaching; it has also kept alive the impression that God still touches the thought of man, and has made more real the thought that religion is not a blessing restricted to ecclesiastical organizations, but is as wide as humanity and as deep as human needs. This service is not perfunctory, official, wrapped up with the interests of a commanding institution whose vigor demands a constant increase of adherents. It is voluntary, free, above suspicion, and consequently admirably fitted to arrest attention, to compel reflection, and to solemnize the heart.

But let us now scrutinize this prophetism more closely, that we may understand its scope, its trend, its undercurrents, and its apparent haven. In what direction is it moving? What ideals is it seeking to actualize, and to what hopes does it seem pledged and consecrated? Is it so completely theological that it has lost sight of man as a social being, and is it so concerned with eternal things that it has no place for those that are temporal? At Weimar there is a statue of Goethe and Schiller. The pose and attitude are typical of the men. Goethe has his arm extended as to command the world. Schiller has his eyes lifted up to heaven; for, as a critic observes, "he always ended among the stars." This statue may be taken as a symbol in bronze of the

two-fold position of the new prophetism. It contemplates the subordination of the world to the spiritual ideals of the gospel; and it is searching in the heights of the unseen universe for fresh disclosures of the infinite mystery. Thus it has a hand toward the earth and eyes toward heaven, and is in reality promoting the union of the human with the divine.

One thing is clear: it is not seeking to achieve this end by clothing its message with the forms of medieval Catholicism. Tennyson, in some respects a representative of the prophetic order, when he gives musical expression to our doubts and fears, our perplexity in the face of evil, our crying in the darkness for the light, has in him no appeal to sacerdotalism or to priestly rites. And Browning, even more of a distinctively religious poet than Tennyson, is equally free of sympathy with hierarchies and sacraments, and reveals his Puritan descent in his strong love of liberty, in his recognition of a "hidden splendor" in us all, and in his confidence that the All-great is the All-loving too, who, "through the thunder, speaks with human voice." The new prophetism is rather away from ancient sacerdotalism than toward it; even away rather from church organizations and systematic theologies than toward them; and it is inclined to exalt mystic feelings above intellectual dogma, to exalt Christ above the creed, and man, man in the majesty of his essential being as the very Shekinah of God, above picturesque patriarchates and painted pontificates.

Modern German literature amply illustrates this tendency toward what may be termed the spiritual. Jean Paul Richter may be taken as an example of the sacred

fire that has been kindled on the altars of the fair humanities. In his own exquisite way he is reported to have said: "Providence has given to the French the empire of the land, to the English that of the sea, to the German that of—the air." If by the "air" he means the higher intellectual life, continually verging toward mysticism, his position can hardly be gainsaid; for if Boehm, Novalis, and the school of theosophy, and the transcendental philosophers, Kant, Fichte, and Schelling, do not establish the pre-eminence, then evidence is unavailing. This Jean Paul himself is a good instance of the aërial and ethereal habitude of his countrymen. He has been suspected of something worse than skepticism, because he abruptly inquires: "Are all your mosques, Episcopal churches, pagodas, chapels of ease, tabernacles, and Pantheons, anything else but the ethnic forecourt of the invisible temple and its holy of holies?" Yet, what have we in this doubt "writ large" but the deep conviction of all minds emancipated from ecclesiastical tradition, expressed in a somewhat arabesque style? He who has read the "*Campanerthal*," a discourse on morality, or who has meditated on these sentences: "When, in your last hour (think of this), all faculty in the broken spirit shall fade away and die into inanity,—imagination, thought, effort, enjoyment,—then at last will the night flower of belief alone continue blooming and refresh with its perfumes in the last darkness," will recognize in Richter a devout soul inspiring his turbulent genius with exalted religious aspirations. Recall this passage:

I walked silently through little hamlets and close by their outer churchyards, where crumbling coffin-boards were glimmering,

while the once bright eyes that had laid in them were moulding into gray ashes. Cold thought! clutch not, like a cold spectre, at my heart. I look up to the starry sky, and an everlasting chain stretches thither and over and below; and all is life and warmth and light, and all is godlike or God.

And, as you reflect on what it involves, you will perceive that you are communing with a mind that is reaching out toward the truth as taught by Christ, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." What can be more practical and more conducive to the spiritual advancement of mankind than the sentiments didactically put in his "Levana"?

At least two miracles or revelations remain for you uncontested in this age which deadens sound with unreverberating materials; they resemble an old and a new testament, and are these—the birth of finite being, and the birth of life within the hard wood of matter. For in one inexplicable thing every other is involved, and one miracle annihilates the whole philosophy. Consequently, you do not act the part of a hypocrite when you permit the child to draw anything out of the book of religion, or the secret book of nature, which you cannot explain. Living religion grows not by the doctrines but by the narratives of the Bible. The best Christian religious doctrine is the life of Christ; and, after that, the sufferings and deaths of his followers, even those not related in holy writ.[1]

These views enter very fully into the writings of Jean Paul, and all tend in the direction of a spirituality untrammeled by the narrowness of inflexible creeds and unhampered by the burdens of ecclesiastical distinctions and exactions. One of Schiller's poems, in summing up his own belief, seems to sum up that of Richter

[1] "Levana," Fragment III.

also, even as it expresses the underlying sentiment of the literary school to which he belonged, the traces of whose influence are seen in the products of English and American thought:

Man is made free!—Man by birthright is free,
Though the tyrant may deem him but born for his tool.
Whatever the shout of the rabble may be—
Whatever the ranting misuse of the fool—
Still fear not the slave, when he breaks from his chain,
For a man made a freeman grows safe in his gain.

And Virtue is more than a shade or a sound,
And man may her voice in his being obey;
And though ever he slip on the stony ground,
Yet ever again to the godlike way,
To the science of Good, though the wise may be blind,
Yet the practice is plain to the childlike mind.

And a God there is!—over space and time,
While the human will rocks, like a reed to and fro,
Lives the Will of the Holy—a purpose sublime,
A thought woven over creation below;
Changing and shifting the All we inherit,
But changeless through one Immutable Spirit.[1]

Of Schiller I have no reason to write. These verses speak for him and ally him with the genius of Jean Paul, and identify him with those whose idealism is born of the divine and whose constant lamentation is that they fail to clutch the stars:

This space between the Ideal of man's soul
And man's achievement, who hath ever past?
An ocean spreads between us and that goal,
Where anchor ne'er was cast.[2]

[1] "Words of Belief," translated by Lord Lytton.
[2] "The Ideal and the Actual Life."

With these men we do not class Goethe. There is not much about him, particularly in his elegant Weimar surroundings, that is suggestive of the prophet. He has been called the great Olympian, and we more readily associate him with Mount Parnassus than with Mount Carmel; and this too, not because he fails in respect for religion. In his "Conversations" with Eckermann and in his works there are various allusions to the value and beauty of the Gospels; and in his interpretation of the "Three Reverences," he assigns the highest to Christianity: "Reverence for what is under us, a last step to which mankind were fitted and destined to attain." But, notwithstanding his concessions, and they sound like concessions, there is a pagan air about the man, a certain coldness and stiffness; and when we hear him say, "Let every enthusiast be put on a cross when he reaches his thirtieth year; when once he comes to know the world, he ceases to be a dupe and becomes a rogue," we realize keenly that he is aloof from the "goodly company of the prophets." But though he may not rank with them, and though he is too much of an artist to be a seer, it is still to his credit that he does not withhold the tribute of his genius from the imperishable beauty of the spiritual.

In Great Britain, the new prophetism has attained impressive proportions, and probably its real scope and development can be more advantageously studied in its literature than in that of any other nation. While, therefore, we shall not and should not overlook entirely what kindred peoples have written relating to our theme, we are bound to concern ourselves principally with its unfolding in the progress of English letters. Instantly,

as we do so, the form of Wordsworth emerges from the mists of the past and we realize that we are in the presence of one who "was called of God to be a prophet." We have no such impression when we think of his contemporary, Sir Walter Scott. Mr. William Wallace, of Glasgow, I know, rates the spiritual and ethical influence of the famous novelist very high, and says, "He was the greatest moral sanitarian that ever appeared in the world of imagination." This unquestionably is true, and yet, while he may have been a literary health-lift, he was distinctly not spiritual. But it was different with the poet of the Lake district. He himself continually trails "clouds of glory" in his song, and his thought is constantly illumined by a "light that never was on sea or land," and, as we listen to his voice, it is as though we heard, as in the convolutions of a shell, the murmurs of a distant sea. His poetry is, as Coleridge said of the "Prelude":

> An Orphic song indeed,
> A song divine, of high and passionate thoughts
> To their own music chanted.

And he writes of God, of nature, of man, of their fellowships and harmonies, of their interblending and reciprocal relations. His prophetism is theological. Fundamental religious conceptions are rarely absent from his mind; he ever returns to them in his poems and lingers fondly over them. In contradistinction to Cowper, who was influenced by the Scriptures and expounded in some degree their evangelical doctrine, Wordsworth was mainly devoted to natural theology. He pictures God as "Wisdom and spirit of the universe," and addresses him in solemn and exalted phrase:

> Thou Soul that art the Eternity of thought,
> And giv'st to forms and images a breath
> And everlasting motion ; not in vain,
> By day or starlight, thus from my first dawn
> Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me
> The passions which build up our human soul.

On the grandeur and all-pervasive influence of this Being he delights to meditate. His

> Dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man
> A motion and a spirit that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things.

To him nature is a living thing, or perhaps rather a series of correlated things, each according to its kind feeling the life of God. Hence he has been accused of pantheism. I do not think the charge has been authenticated. While he evidently believes in the immanence of God, there are passages in his poems which seem to demand his transcendence. But, either way, the whole drift of his teaching is alien to materialism. It rejects, scorns, and deplores a philosophy which substitutes a mechanical principle for the all-animating and sustaining spirit of creation. Nature is not a corpse, a dead thing that cannot commune with man. There is in it a voice, and there is in it a power that makes us feel deeply the mysteries of faith. These beliefs are illustrated in the familiar lines where the child is represented as hearing the ocean's murmurings in the shell :

> Even such a shell the universe itself
> Is to the ear of faith ; and there are times,

I doubt not, when to you it doth impart
Authentic tidings of invisible things ;
Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power ;
And central peace, subsisting at the heart
Of endless agitation.

And writing of a herdsman on "a lonely mountain-top," the poet advances a step farther :

Early had he learned
To reverence the volume that displays
The mystery, the life which cannot die ;
But in the mountains did he *feel* his faith.
All things responsive to the writing, there
Breathed immortality, revolving life,
And greatness still revolving, infinite ;
There littleness was not ; the least of things
Seemed infinite ; and there his spirit shaped
Her prospects, nor did he believe—he *saw*.

In verses such as these, however, it is to be observed that he exalts man as well as nature. If nature can impart and teach, man is susceptible to her influences and can learn. To commune together implies something in common : and he who can understand, even in part, the speech of God articulated in sun, moon, stars, in drifting clouds and fragrant flowers, cannot be but allied to him, both in his origin and destiny :

Hence in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither ;
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the children sport upon the shore
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

It is generally allowed that the French Revolution appealed profoundly to Wordsworth's imagination, as it did to many other brilliant minds on the close of the eighteenth century. To him it came as a historic confirmation of his fairest hopes. He saw in its upheavals and changes promises of the better age. Of them, its expectation had not been born, but was the necessary outcome of his spiritual and optimistic philosophy. But they were to him assurances that his dream was not an unrealizable illusion, and encouraged him to proclaim his faith :

> I with him believed
> That a benignant spirit was abroad
> Which might not be withstood, that poverty
> Abject to this would in a little time
> Be found no more, that we should see the earth
> Unthwarted in her wish to recompense
> The meek, the lowly, patient child of toil ;
> All institutes forever blotted out
> That legalized exclusion, empty pomp
> Abolished, sensual state and cruel power,
> Whether by edict of the one or few ;
> And finally, as sum and crown of all,
> Should see the people having a strong hand
> In framing their own laws ; whence better days
> To all mankind.

And sentiments such as these have been gaining ground throughout the century, deepening the conviction that the fairest social life of man depends in a very vital sense on the philosophy cherished regarding his origin and dignity.

In Robert Browning we have perhaps the prophets' most brilliant representative if not their most musical

and artistic champion; but in him they are more completely identified with Christianity than in many other writers, and his prophetism seems to be as fully inspired by revelation as by nature. "I believe in God and truth and love," is the first article of the poet's creed, and the second:

> I say the acknowledgment of God in Christ
> Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
> All questions in the earth and out of it.

In a very actual sense, Browning is theological, and in his works reflects the profoundest religious thought of his age. What Edward Caird has done in prose within the boundary of organized Christianity, the poet has done beyond. He is no pantheist. "What I call God and fools call nature," is his preliminary statement to a theism of the loftiest kind, in which love becomes the crown and glory:

> For the loving worm within its clod
> Were diviner than a loveless God
> Amid his worlds.

Hence, his discrimination and confidence as developed in "A Soul's Tragedy":

> I trust in nature for the stable laws
> Of beauty and utility. . .
> I trust in God—the right shall be the right
> And other than the wrong, while he endures.

But in the poems "Pauline," "Christmas Eve," and "Easter Day," the author advances toward the central gospel conceptions of our Lord's divinity and atoning sacrifice. Thus devoutly he appeals to Christ:

O thou pale form ! . . .
Oft have I stood by thee—
Have I been keeping lonely watch with thee
In the damp night by weeping Olivet,
Or leaning on thy bosom, proudly less,
Or dying with thee on the lonely cross,
Or witnessing thy bursting from the tomb.

Then, briefly, he sums up the mystery of his being, in the pregnant description :

He who trod,
Very man and very God,
The earth in weakness, shame, and pain.

Man he studies as no poet in the century has studied him. He sees in him an "imprisoned splendor," and declares that nowhere is God more really present than in the human heart :

God . . . dwells in all,
From life's minute beginnings, up at last
To man—the consummation of this scheme
Of being, the completion of this sphere
Of life.

Moreover, in him he discovers what he calls the "great beacon-light God sets in all" :

The worst man upon earth . . .
Be sure, he knows, in his conscience, more
Of what right is, than arrives at birth
In the best man's acts that we bow before ;
This last knows better—true, but my fact is,
'Tis one thing to know, and another to practise.

While he often discourses on deflections from the light of conscience and on the working of sin and pain, he is no pessimist. He declares :

This world no blot for us,
Nor blank ; it means intensely, and means good.

He further says :

Life is probation, and the earth no goal
But starting-point of man : compel him to strive,
Which means, in man, as good as reach the goal.

Hence it is that he finds a legitimate and beneficent place for temptation in the world :

Why comes temptation, but for man to meet
And master and make crouch beneath his foot,
And so be pedestaled in triumph ? Pray
"Lead us into no such temptations, Lord !"
Yea, but, O Thou whose servants are the bold,
Lead such temptations by the head and hair,
Reluctant dragons, up to who dares fight,
That so he may do battle and have praise.

To one who in this way interprets the buffetings of evil and who believes that "all things shall work together for our good," there can be no dread of the last conflict. We are not, therefore, surprised to hear Browning, in "Prospice," exclaiming :

I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last !
I would hate that death bandage my eyes,
And bade me creep past.
No ! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers,
The heroes of old.

There are various poems among his writings which deal with different aspects of religious life, that take up the question of immortality and of duty. They are all

marked by the most earnest desire to deliver the race from bondage to the carnal and the earthy, and in one poem—"Christmas Eve"—ecclesiasticism and the restricting and parochial conceptions of Christianity are swept away, and the reader sees that Christ may be found in the German professor's workshop as well as in the stately Basilica at Rome, or in the humble dissenting chapel. What then? Is he inculcating indifference? Not at all. He shows that true religion is not bound up with and made valid by certain sacerdotal edifices and rites. As Frothingham interprets the moral of the dramatic poem, we are to learn

> Not to despise the bald service and the poor talk, but to see in the one a helpful worship, and in the other a divine message—living water, though with a taste of earthy matter. The very simplicity seems best as casting earthly aids behind and letting "God's all in all serene show with the thinnest human veil between." And the poor congregation, offensive before, now seem to witness to the justice of his conclusion by the fact that, being as they are, they are helped and bettered by their faith.[1]

In these various ways, the prophetism of Browning reveals itself as strikingly spiritual and as distinctively Christian. It advances farther than that of Wordsworth and is not exactly paralleled in the literature of other lands.

If Tennyson were gifted with the spirit of the seer, it failed to reveal itself in theology; for even "In Memoriam," though a unique production of almost unexampled melody, cannot be regarded as an unfolding of Christian truth; while in the "Christ that is to be" he seems rather to have contemplated him as incarnated

[1] "Studies in Poetry," of Robert Browning, pp. 210, 212.

in "the larger man and free" than in some new and more striking exposition of his character and mission. Prophetism disclosed itself in his works along other lines than these, as we shall see later on.

In France it seems rather to avoid theology than to court it, and in the writers of America it does not attain the expression to which it is entitled. This is not saying that it has had no expression at all. We have our Walt Whitman, with his incoherent splendor, called "the poet of immortality," who feels and talks about the powers of unseen worlds. What more in the prophetic style than his rhapsodical vision of the future:

See ever so far, there is limitless space outside of that,
Count ever so much, there is limitless time around that.
My rendezvous is appointed, it is certain.
My Lord will be there and wait till I come on perfect terms,
The great Camarado, the lover true for whom I pine will be there.

And then there is Whittier, in his own quiet way as tender as Jeremiah, as seraphic as Isaiah, discoursing on eternal mysteries in tones that charm and yet subdue. None more spiritual than he in the great world of letters, and none who has done more to aid the soul in asserting its freedom. A few illustrations of the thoughts that entered into his religious views are worthy of citation here:

All is of God that is, and is to be;
And God is good. Let this suffice us still,
Resting in childlike trust upon his will
Who moves to his great ends unthwarted by the ill.

. . . . . .

But still my human hands are weak
To hold your iron creeds:

Against the words ye bid me speak
My heart within me pleads.
Who fathoms the eternal thought?
Who talks of scheme and plan?
The Lord is God! He needeth not
The poor device of man.
I walk with bare, hushed feet the ground
Ye tread with boldness shod;
I dare not fix with mete and bound
The love and power of God.

. . . . . .

Not mine to look where cherubim
And seraphs may not see,
But nothing can be good in him
Which evil is in me.

. . . . . .

And hears unmoved the old creeds babble still
Of kingly power and dread caprice of will,
Chary of blessing, prodigal of curse,
The pitiless doomsman of the universe.
Can Hatred ask for love? Can Selfishness
Invite to self-denial? Is he less
Than man in kindly dealing? Can he break
His own great law of fatherhood, forsake
And curse his children? Not for earth or heaven
Can separate tables of the law be given.
No rule can bind which he himself denies;
The truths of time are not eternal lies.

He who is, in a distinctive sense, called the "Seer," Ralph Waldo Emerson, in terms of equal breadth, when formulating his own belief, outlines the transcendental ideals which have been striving in vain for general recognition. Their failure, however, to inspire confidence arises from their disregard of those foundations on which human reason seeks to build its religion. He

gives us magnificent cloud effects, while denying that there is an ocean whence their substance has been derived; he delights us with the silvery sheen of starlight on the river, while declaring that the river is, in reality, superfluous; and he charms us by proposing to rescue the spiritual nature of man from "the wooden stocks of tradition"—a deliverance in every way desirable—while he does not think it necessary to furnish its pinions with a spiritual atmosphere sufficiently dense to sustain its freedom. But, still, in an age when logic may be greatly overdone, and when mechanical theories of every kind may acquire undue influence, it is refreshing to read Emerson and be swept away by his splendid abandon. Thus, though we cannot agree with his negations, we are lifted up by his sublime assurances when he writes:

I believe the Christian religion to be profoundly true—true to an extent that they who are styled the most orthodox defenders have never, or but in rarest glimpses, once or twice in a lifetime, reached. I am for the principles; they are for the man. They reckon me unbelieving; I, with better reason, them. They magnify inspiration, miracles, mediatorship, the Trinity, baptism, the eucharist. I let them all drop in sight of the glorious beauty of those inward laws or harmonies which ravished the eyes of Jesus, of Socrates, of Plato, of Dante, of Milton, of George Fox, of Swedenborg. With regard to the miracles ascribed to Jesus, I suppose he wrought them. If (which has not yet been done) it should be shown that the account of his miracles is only the addition of credulous and mistaking love, I should be well content to lose them. Indeed, I should be glad. No person capable of perceiving the force of spiritual truth but must see that the doctrines of the teacher lose no more by this than the law of gravity would lose if certain facts alleged to have taken place did not take place. . . Now in every country the spiritual nature of man re-

fuses any longer to be holden in the wooden stocks of tradition, and insists that what is called Christianity shall take front rank, not formal or peculiar, but strictly on its universal merits, as one act out of many acts of the human mind.

But it were erroneous, from the prominence we have given to the religious teachings of our nineteenth century seers, to straightway conclude that ancient prophetism was exclusively or pre-eminently theological. The old prophets were not professors; they were reformers. They were undoubtedly inspired by the truth, and cherished the truth, and never, in their greatest enthusiasm, reached that degree of intellectual inanity which perceives no practical difference in value between truth and error; but, at the same time, their chief business was to render that truth operative in actual life. Through visions of coming good, through denunciations of existing evil, and by the most faithful and pungent preaching of righteousness to awaken the conscience, they labored for national regeneration, stability, and progress. They were optimists and encouraged the people in expectations of a final reign of peace and purity. Of the future, they never despaired, and nothing doubted but that God would, in the coming time, set his king on the holy hill of Zion. The more vividly they realized the divine purpose in human exaltation and happiness, the more ardently and impetuously they labored for its fulfillment. Hence, almost with the same breath in which they announced their visions of human brotherhood and beatitude, they held up to withering scorn and contempt apostate priests, cruel and contumacious kings, and pronounced the curse of heaven on fields and vineyards and on horses and chariots which

had been conscripted by tyranny to serve the cause of oppression.

These men were not mere "socialists of the chair"; they were not theorists; they were not theological system-builders; neither were they speculative religious dreamers. They were moral heroes, governed by commanding spiritual conceptions and aflame with zeal for the salvation of Israel. They warned, rebuked, entreated; they exposed the sins and perils of the nation; they fearlessly foretold impending calamities and pointed out the way of escape to rulers and their advisers; and in the ears of their contemporaries they constantly sounded the sweet assurance of better times, and, in many a sweet-cadenced prophecy exclaimed:

> All hail! The age of crime and suffering ends;
> The reign of righteousness from heaven descends;
> Vengeance forever sheaths the afflicting sword;
> Death is destroyed and Paradise restored;
> Man, rising from the ruins of his fall,
> Is one with God, and God is All in all.[1]

Nor have their successors in this respect altogether failed to catch their spirit. The prophetism of our own day, while constantly tending toward spiritual views of religion, occasionally inclining toward indefiniteness and vagueness, has been remarkable for its deep horror of public and private infamies, its clear discernment that things cannot continue as they are, its sympathy with the social aims of the age, and for its belief in the final triumph of human brotherhood. Of those who represent this phase of modern prophetism, there is no figure

[1] James Montgomery.

more interesting, picturesque, and commanding than that of Thomas Carlyle. Of his theological opinions little need be said. He was born in Calvinism and inherited Calvinism, and in his revolt from the doctrine of his sires it was almost impossible for him to escape from Calvinism; but his theology, in the main, was incoherent and turbulent, like his rhetoric, and was mostly of the negative type, but was strongly and persistently opposed to materialism, or, as he termed it, "mud philosophies." What a whirlwind and torrent of emotion there is in his "Eternities," "Immensities," "Silences," and in his apocalyptic speech about religion:

> The universe is made by law—the great Soul of the world is just and not unjust. . . Rituals, liturgies, credos, Sinai thunder, I know more or less of the history of those—the rise, progress, decline, and fall of these. Can thunder from the thirty-two Azimuths repeated daily for centuries of years make God's laws more godlike to me? Brother, no! Revelation, inspiration, yes and thy own God-created soul; dost thou not call that a revelation? Who made thee? Where didst thou come from? The voice of eternity, if thou be not a blasphemer and poor asphyxied mute, speaks with that tongue of thine. Thou art the latest book of nature; it is the inspiration of the Almighty giveth thee understanding, my brother, my brother.[1]

Bewildering and extravagant as such a fantasia may sound, there underlies it and runs through it the note which is the key to much that is now being attempted in social reform—the incalculable dignity of humanity. Mr. Froude writes interestingly about Carlyle, refers repeatedly to his "creed," regards him as prophet and teacher, whose words were "like the morning reveille"

[1] "Past and Present," pp. 307–309.

to searchers after truth, and whose influence has saved him from positivism, Romanism, and atheism; but he discloses to us nothing in his teachings more startling and revolutionary than the high estimate he placed on man: "God not only made us, and beholds us, but is in us and around us. The age of miracles, as it ever was, now is. . . This is the high gospel begun to be preached; man is still man."[1] Of this gospel as understood by the Scotch sage, was born the ever-memorable "Sartor Resartus," a book that comes to us like a phantasmagoria, mirage, or mystical dream, in which we recognize Titanic revolutionary forces, and in which the reverence for honest toil transmitted after weary centuries from Langland to Wordsworth at last finds sympathetic and whimsically tragic expression. "Hardly entreated brother!" he writes, "for us was thy back so bent; for us were thy straight limbs and fingers so deformed; thou wert our conscript on whom the lot fell, and fighting our battles wert so marred." Pathetic portrait this, which has found artistic counterpart in "The Angelus," and poetic embodiment in Markham's "The Man with the Hoe":

> How will you ever straighten up this shape,
> Touch it again with immortality;
> Give back the upward looking and the light;
> Rebuild in it the music and the dreams;
> Make right the immemorial infamies,
> Perfidious wrongs, immedicable woes?

Carlyle continues:

Two men I honor and no third: first, the toil-worn craftsman that with earth-made implement laboriously conquers the earth

[1] "Characteristics."

and makes her man's. . . A second man I honor, and still more highly : him who is seen toiling for the spiritually indispensable ; not daily bread, but the bread of life. It is not because of his toils that I lament for the poor ; we must all toil or steal (howsoever we name our stealing), which is worse. . . But what I do mourn over is that the lamp of his soul should go out ; that no ray of heavenly or even earthly knowledge should visit him ; but only in the haggard darkness, like two spectres, fear and indignation bear him company. Alas, while the body stands so broad and brawny, must the soul lie blinded, dwarfed, stupefied, almost annihilated? Alas, was this too a breath of God bestowed in heaven but on earth never to be unfolded? . . Do we wonder at French revolutions, Chartisms, revolts of three days? The times, if we will consider them, are really unexampled.

And yet these were the days when Macaulay could felicitate England on her wonderful progress; when "Sheffield was sending forth its admirable knives, razors, and lancets to the farthest ends of the world." The elegant essayist seemed unconscious of a new "Iliad" being enacted at the very center of civilization, one more grimy, filthy, crushing, and disastrous, and one less heroic, thrilling, and inspiring than that of Troy. But our prophet is not without hope. Paradise must follow the day of judgment. Social cosmos must surely succeed the social chaos. Hence, as though controlled by the same spirit that made the isle of Patmos a very *urim* and *thummim* of illumination, he exclaims :

In that fire whirlwind, creation and destruction proceed together ; ever, as the ashes of the old are blown about, do organic filaments of the new mysteriously spin themselves ; and amid the rushing and the waving of the whirlwind element come tones of melodious death-song which end not but in tones of a more melodious birth-song. Nay, look into the fire-whirlwind with thine own eyes, and thou wilt see.

One who did thus look was John Ruskin, who, when Carlyle was indicting modern society, was quietly composing his eloquent interpretations of the beautiful. The world was charmed by the "Seven Lamps of Architecture," "The Stones of Venice," and "Modern Painters," though it was suspicious of their religious tone. Still, there was no thought, apparently, that the great art critic would in the end become a prophet of the living God, an Elisha to Carlyle's Elijah, on whom the mantle of the Scottish seer would fall. Yet even this surprise was in store for the age; nor was the transition so astounding when the religious temper, faith, and education of the man are taken into consideration. When we recall him as he has revealed himself in his personal allusions, we are reminded of what he wrote regarding the interior of St. Mark's. As the heavy doors open and we enter the sacred edifice, he writes: "It is the cross that is first seen, and always burning in the center of the temple; and every dome and hollow of its roof has the figure of Christ in the utmost height of it, raised in power or returning in judgment." When we draw near to Ruskin, and when we draw aside the curtain and look into his soul, we see there the cross. The man is himself San Marco, only "greater than the temple," and his chief glory is that his thought, emotion, purpose, are influenced by the cross and reveal the cross at almost every stage of their manifestation. Concerning the Bible, he writes:

> It is a creed with a great part of the existing English-speaking people that they are in possession of a book which tells them straight from the lips of God all they ought to do and need to know. I have read that book with as much care as most of them

for some forty years, and am thankful that on those who trust it I can press its pleadings. My endeavor has been uniformly to make them trust it more deeply than they do ; trust it, not in the favorite verses only, but in the sum of all ; trust it, not as a fetich or talisman, which they are to be saved by daily repetitions of, but as a captain's order, to be heard and obeyed at their peril.

Then, having defined the creed, he proceeds to show in what manner it should be used :

Right faith of man is not intended to give him repose, but to enable him to do his work. It is not intended that he should look away from the place he lives in now and cheer himself with thoughts of the place he is to live in next, but that he should look stoutly into this world, trusting that if he does his work thoroughly here some good . . . will come of it hereafter. This kind of brave faith I perceive to be always rewarded with clear, practical success and splendid intellectual power, while the faith which dwells on the future fades away into rosy mist and emptiness of musical air.

That he would have it operative in daily affairs is made quite clear when, in addressing a lady of fashion, he urges her to try "God's fashions occasionally," as the original Creator of the beautiful "will be found to have as good taste as any *modiste* known." He then quaintly suggests to her that, in planning the next party, she shall imagine that Christ, being still here in the body, has just sent word that he will be one of the guests, and that he wants to meet exactly the party she has invited, and no other. Ruskin then requests her to "consider who is to sit next Christ on the other side, who opposite, and so on ; finally, consider a little what you will talk about, supposing, which is just possible, that Christ should tell you to go on talking as if he were not there." Can we readily picture to ourselves the constraint of

the guests? and do we not perceive a certain incongruity in introducing the Master to a modern banquet, and in attempting to make our *fin de siècle* banqueters at ease with Christ? And, yet, what is there so strange in the companionship after all? Does not the seeming grotesqueness of the situation arise from the actual antagonism of modern society to the spirit of Jesus? They are not in accord, and are radically antipathetical. This, the religious nature of Ruskin keenly realized, and, in feeling it as he did and in expressing it in such terms as he employed, he gave proof that it was from the cross he had received his religious life. Only from such a source could have been born the sympathy which he cannot conceal when he voices the plaint and complaint of the desolate: "The ant and moth have cells for each of their young, but our little ones lie in festering heaps, in homes that consume them like graves; and night by night, from the corners of our streets, rises up the cry of the homeless: 'I was a stranger, and ye took me not in.'"

It is probable that, in the preparation of the second volume of "Modern Painters," John Ruskin had misgivings whether he was doing the exact work Christ had placed him in the world to accomplish. When in that book he raises the question whether the contemplation and enjoyment of beauty have any right to absorb us in a world of pain, the spirit of prophetism is being born in his soul. This first suspicion led him much farther and ended in this more serious conclusion, which might have fallen from the lips of an Isaiah:

> Consider whether, even supposing it guiltless, luxury would be desired by any of us if we saw clearly at our side the misery which

accompanies it in the world. Luxury is indeed possible in the future—innocent and exquisite; luxury for all, and by the help of all; but luxury at present can only be enjoyed by the ignorant; the cruelest man living could not sit at this feast unless he sat blindfold.

These grave and comprehensive words are from "Unto This Last," which, with his "Political Economy of Art," and "*Munera Pulveris*," affords us an idea of how he understood his new vocation. It is his distinction among Englishmen, as it is that of Tolstoy among Russians, to be foremost, if not the first, in insisting on the application of Christian laws to commerce and to industry. This, we gather from his various books on sociological subjects and from that extraordinary medley entitled "*Fors Clavigera*," which he addressed to British workmen. These volumes are full of beautiful passages and of sound thought in defense of the position that it is the supreme end of civilization to produce manhood and maintain it in happiness. "It is open to serious question, which I leave to the reader's pondering, whether, among national manufacturers, that of souls of a good quality may not at last turn out a quite leadingly lucrative one." "There is no wealth but life; life, including all its powers of love, of joy, and of admiration. That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings; that man is richest who, having perfected the functions of his own life to the utmost, has also the widest influence, both personal and by means of his possessions, over the lives of others." Hence, the commonplace inference from these premises are: "Whatever our station in life may be, at this crisis those of us

who mean to fulfill our duty ought, first, to live on as little as we can, and, secondly, to do all the wholesome work for it we can, and to spend all we can spare in doing all the sure good we can. And sure good is, first, in feeding people; then, in dressing people; then, in lodging people; and, lastly, in rightly pleasing people, with arts or sciences or any other subject of thought." Quite after the Christian manner is the doctrine of this prophet, summed up, as it may be, in the aphorism, "There is no wealth but life." This judgment places man in his true position and opens up an economical science in which the interests of manhood, and not the accumulation of money as capital, become the prime object and concern. It is only a new way of stating what Christ solemnly declared: "The life is more than meat and the body than raiment." And not until this teaching becomes the organizing principle of society can we expect any very remarkable change for the better. This is the germ of a new civilization. It is the seed of a purer age, one in which the race will not only be enfranchised from original bestiality, and sublunary happiness cease being the vassal of commercial vicissitude, but when men will be too strong to be made the tools of selfish greed and too brave to become the slaves of corporate tyranny, and when "the gathering blackness of the frown of God" shall forever be dispelled. Until then, let us "remember," as Thomas Hardy admonishes us, "that the best and greatest among mankind are those who do themselves no worldly good. Every successful man is more or less a selfish man. The devoted fail."

Literature has given to the modern world other pro-

phetic voices than those whose masterful eloquence has thus far challenged our admiration. They sound forth in different tongues and in various lands, and yet their message is substantially the same. Nor will it do to classify them as the voices of the "minor prophets"; for, among them, we can hear the speech of a Tolstoy, of a Victor Hugo, of a Lamennais, of a Lowell, of a Shelley, of a Burns, of a Longfellow, of a Howells, of a William Morris, of a Julia Ward Howe, of a Harriet Beecher Stowe, and of a Heine, who declares, as though speaking for them all, that "the great work of our age is emancipation."

The century opened with the immortal Marseillaise of humanity, "A man's a man for a' that!" from the heart of Robert Burns, awakening hope in the millions and re-echoing in the verse of Shelley:

> They know that never joy illumed my brow,
> Unlinked with hope that thou wouldst free
> The world from its dark slavery.

From this time, even the proud and noble began to feel an interest in what Gray terms "The short and simple annals of the poor"; and Tennyson translates for us the meaning that stirs through them all and the direction toward which they point:

> And we shall sit at endless feast,
> Enjoying each the other's good:
> What vaster dream can hit the mood
> Of love on earth?

Nor can all the evils he takes note of with advancing years induce him to abandon the

Golden dream
Of knowledge fusing class with class,
Of civic hate no more to be,
Of love to leaven all the mass
Till every soul be free.

Neither can the inequalities of our times daunt the brave heart of William Morris; and he gives expression to his confidence in the "Dream of John Ball," the famous Lollard preacher, who demanded the rights secured to the people by Magna Charta: "John Ball, be of good cheer; for once more thou knowest as I know, that the fellowship of men shall endure, however many tribulations it may have to wear through."

American literature is likewise loyal to this faith. Emerson heralds the dignity and independence of the individual

> Another sign of our times is the new importance given to the single person. . . Is it not the chief disgrace in the world not to be a unit; not to be reckoned one character; not to yield that peculiar fruit which each man was created to bear, but to be reckoned in the gross . . . and our opinion predicted geographically, as the north or the south. Not so, brothers and friends—please God, ours shall not be so. We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds. . . . A nation of men will for the first time exist, because each believes himself inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men.[1]

But the conscious greatness of the individual must be followed by the unity of the whole; for the sense of equality must precede the realization of fraternity. There can be no brotherhood between the man and the

[1] "American Scholar."

tiger, and there can be none where there is a difference insisted on between men as men; but when it is perceived that while they may be unequal in strength, health, mind, and estate, they are essentially one in nature and necessarily one in rights before the law, then the way will be clear for the "parliament of man, the federation of the world." That this consummation is hastening fast, Walt Whitman is assured, and strengthens our faith in his own prophetic fashion:

> What whispers are these, O lands, running ahead
> of you, passing under the sea?
> Are all nations communing? Is there going to be
> but one heart to the globe?

And in answering in the affirmative, and in anticipating the objection that such expectations are only optimistic illusions, he cries:

> Is it a dream?
> Nay, but the lack of it the dream,
> And failing it, life's love and wealth a dream,
> And all the world a dream.

From the convictions born of the Bible and confirmed by the Declaration of Independence, which early flowered into Emerson's prose and later in Whitman's verse, there emanated much of that great literature which was largely instrumental in breaking the shackles of the slave in North America. For Lowell, for Longfellow, for Bronson Alcott, for Whittier, and their fellows, as well as for Garrison and Phillips, humanity should give thanks; and we should all be grateful that through them the solemn oath was registered which in God's providence has been even more solemnly ratified:

But for us and for our children, the vow which we have given
For freedom and humanity is registered in heaven ;
No slave-hunt in our borders—no pirate on our strand !
No fetters in the Bay State—no slave upon our land !

That infamy removed, prophetic voices in our country are now sadly hymning the burdens of the poor, and are asking what avails our much-boasted prosperity if multitudes cannot earn a living wage. These voices do not despair of the future, but they clamor that its visions of hope be not permitted to obscure the despairing facts of the present. Sidney Lanier's pathetic wail is but a sign that genius is waking up to a new mission, which is after all only another phase of the old. Listen as he indignantly and sorrowfully asks :

Yea, what avail the endless tale
Of gain by cunning and plus by sale ?
Look up the land, look down the land,
The poor, the poor, the poor, they stand
Wedged by the pressing of Trade's hand
Against an inward-opening door,
That pressure tightens evermore.
They sigh a monstrous, foul-air sigh
For the outside leagues of liberty,
Where Art, sweet lark, translates the sky
Into a heavenly melody.[1]

But by and by the door shall open outwardly and the trade-imprisoned and trade-tortured multitudes breathe the sweet, pure air of freedom and share with the lark her matin song of joy.

Thus nobly have English-speaking men of letters furthered the cause of human emancipation and happiness.

[1] "The Symphony."

They are not, however, solitary workers. Other climes have witnessed the endeavors of writers to promote the liberty and well-being of the masses. "But time would fail to tell" of Delavigne and his devotion to the Greeks; of Petofi; of Eötvös; of Josika, whose songs and stories inspired Hungary to assert her rights; of Jahn; of Körner; of Freiligrath, to whom the Germans owe much of their national spirit; of Karamzin; of Pushkin; of Gogol; of Tourgenieff, whose writings have saved Russia from the terrible serfdom of the past, and have tended to abate the rigors of absolute autocracy; and of Béranger; of Eugene Sue; of Victor Hugo, who taught France that the people have souls, that "the king's heart is not in the hand of God, as God has no hand and the king no heart," and that to-morrow will be humanity's day of deliverance, "from the slave dealer to the Pharisee, from the cabin where the slave weeps to the chapel where the eunuch sings." Time would fail to tell and to recount the achievements of these prophets, who have restrained political tyranny; who have forwarded the emancipation of industry; who have vindicated humanity; and who have given us an insight into the beauty and power of that brotherhood of whose "Muse" Edwin Markham has lately sung so sweetly:

> I come to lift the soul-destroying weight,
> To heal the hurt, to end the foolish loss,
> To take the toiler from his brutal fate—
> The toiler hanging on the Labor-Cross.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Still hope for man; my star is in the way!
> Great Hugo saw it from his prison isle;

It lit the mighty dream of Lamennais ;
It shook the ocean thunders of Carlyle.

Wise Greeley touched the star of my desire,
Great Lincoln knelt before my hidden flame :
It was from me they drew their sacred fire—
I am Religion by her deeper name.

The reference to Victor Hugo in this verse is more than happy; for it reminds us that the great Frenchman not only himself serves the cause of human fraternity by his glorious literary genius, but, moreover, insists that to no sublimer cause can it be devoted. He is clear and direct on this point. Many theories have been broached concerning the mission of art, whether in painting or in letters. Some of these were appealed to in Hugo's day for the purpose of depreciating the quality of his work. In answering these critics he has in reality appealed to the creators of literature not to despise the vocation and the obligation of the prophet.

"You say," he writes, "the muse is made to sing, to love, to believe, to pray." Yes, and no. Let us understand each other. To sing to whom? The void? To love whom? One's self? To believe what? The dogma? To pray to what? The idol? No, here is the truth : to sing to the ideal, to love humanity, to believe in progress, to pray toward the infinite. . . Help from the strong for the weak, help from the great for the small, help from the free for the slaves, help from the thinkers for the ignorant, help from the solitary for the multitudes—such is the law from Isaiah to Voltaire. He who does not follow this law may be a genius, but he is only a genius of luxury. By not handling the things of earth he thinks to purify himself; but he annuls himself. He is the refined, the delicate, he may be the exquisite genius. Any one, roughly useful, but useful, has the right to ask, on seeing this good-for-nothing genius, "Who is this idler?"

The amphora which refuses to go to the fountain deserves the hisses of the water-pots.

"Great is he who consecrates himself! Even when overcome he remains serene, and his misfortune is happiness. No, it is not a bad thing for the poet to be brought face to face with duty. Duty has a stern likeness to the ideal. The task of doing one's duty is worth undertaking. Truth, honesty, the instruction of the masses, human liberty, manly virtue, conscience, are not things to disdain."

It is well known that the Hebrew prophets recognized their own limitations. At the very height of their influence they are always predicting the coming of One who is to "reign and prosper," who is to be as "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land," and who shall neither "fail nor be discouraged" till he has set judgment in the earth. They realize that the power to save society is not in themselves but in the Messiah. Of him they speak; to him they point; he is the burden of their loftiest announcements, the center and glory of their most beatific visions; and next to him, a people called by his name, a new Israel, a grander nation, a holier kingdom of men, taking final shape, if shape it has, in the church of God, the fellowship of the saints. During the ministry of Christ and his apostles, this spiritual community emerged from the hard, cruel Jewish and pagan world like a stone hewn from a mountain without hands. It is not to be said that the church was to take the place of her Lord after his ascension, but rather that he was to take his place in her as the permanent source of her life and influence. To him then, first by himself and afterward to him in her, the ancient prophets looked for the divine energy necessary to convert their dreams into the commonplaces of experience

and to fulfill in glorious measure all the terms of their glowing predictions. Modern prophetism also has its limitations. It is a voice only, crying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." The real work of saving society is to be done and can only be done by spiritual forces.

Hence, Professor Lombroso has confessed that social problems can only be solved by a religion that takes "as its standard the new social ideals which Christ has already preached"; and Louis Kossuth declared in his day that "if the doctrines of Christianity which are found in the New Testament could be applied to home society, the solution of the social problem would be reached." Consequently, the tone and extent of modern prophetism carry with them an appeal to the conscience of the church and a discovery of her responsibility. What she may do is involved in Lowell's brilliant description of what she has been:

> Christianity has never been concession, never peace; it is continual aggression; one province of wrong conquered, its pioneers are already in the heart of another. The milestones of its onward march down the ages have not been monuments of material power, but the blackened stakes of martyrs, trophies of individual fidelity to conviction; for it is the only religion which is superior to all endowment, to all authority—which has a bishopric and a cathedral whenever a single human soul has surrendered itself to God.

Is this her character, this her record, this her wonderful power? All then that she needs to render her effective in regenerating modern society is—conscience. Given this, given an awakened, sensitive conscience, and "the world's redemption would be nigh, even at the door." Let her recognize the truth. Prophetism in literature, like prophetism in the Old Testament, can

never bring to pass the changes it desires and the blessings it portrays. If these are ever to be accomplished it must be through one greater than the prophets—through Christ incarnate in his church, of whom it has been written for our consolation: "And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it." [1] Prophetism announces the coming and the need of the Christ-church, and it is for her, in these latter days, like her Lord, openly to avow and undertake her mission. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." [2]

[1] Micah 4 : 3, 4. [2] Luke 4 : 18, 19.

V

THE CHURCH AND SOCIETY

No peace for thee, no peace,
Till blind oppression cease ;
The stones cry from the walls,
Till the gray injustice falls,
Till strong men come to build in freedom-fate
The pillars of the new Fraternal State.
Let trifling pipe be mute,
Fling by the languid lute ;
Take down the trumpet and confront the hour,
And speak to toil-worn nations from a tower ;
Take down the horn wherein the thunders sleep,
Blow battles into men, call down the fire,
The daring, the long purpose, the desire :
Descend with faith into the human deep.

—*Markham.*

V

THE SOCIAL AWAKENING OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

RATHER to churches than to poets should these stinging words,

> Let trifling pipe be mute,
> Fling by the languid lute,

have been addressed by their author; for churches, by their origin and nature, have been exalted to the loftiest height of commanding authority, and they have been especially commissioned to found the new "Fraternal State." For them, therefore, to idly play with the "languid lute" while the people are perishing for lack of bread is for them to be stained with blood-guiltiness; and for them to muffle the sharp notes of the gospel trumpet, and for them to play in the shallows of human affairs instead of fathoming the depths, is for them either to be unpardonably oblivious to their grave vocation or to be shamefully disloyal to its obligations. A prominent monthly magazine[1] has recently reproached a dignified Church Congress held in London, for failing in any way to consider the tremendous issues in South Africa, involving immense sacrifices in life and treasure, but which could "wax wildly enthusiastic or indignant, as the case might be, about such momentous matters as incense and candles." "The weightier matters of the law, justice, righteousness, and peace," did not seem to

[1] "Review of Reviews," November, 1899.

concern these exalted and reverend divines. Whenever such an instance as this occurs, the contrast becomes painfully acute between the church as she sometimes is, and as she ought to be, and as she is more and more coming to be, and accentuates the necessity that still exists for determined efforts to "call down the fire" on her altars, and for burning appeals that she may feel the significance of the present hour and not only "blow battles into men" but herself be a constant battle on behalf of "toil-worn nations."

That she has a gospel for time as well as for eternity will scarcely be challenged by those who are familiar with New Testament teachings. There we read passages of gracious import which relate to the present life and which, taken together, constitute a social gospel which it behooves the children of God to proclaim and actualize. Let us take a few of these texts, that we may form some idea of the aim and scope of this social evangel. It is written:

"Let all that ye do be done in love." "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: love therefore is the fulfilment of the law." "Remember them that are in bonds as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity as being yourselves also in the body." "To do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." "And whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it." "If because of meat thy brother is grieved, thou walkest no longer in love. Destroy not with thy meat him for whom Christ died." "What doth it profit, my brethren, . . if a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye

even so to them." "Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come." "Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth";—

a warning that recalls the threatenings of the prophet Jeremiah:

"Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by injustice; that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not his hire; that saith, I will build me a wide house and spacious chambers, . . and it is cieled with cedar and painted with vermillion. Shalt thou reign because thou strivest to excel in cedar? Did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice? Then it was well with him."[1]

Declarations almost identical with these could be well-nigh indefinitely multiplied; but even these, taken in connection with the Sermon on the Mount, reveal a social ideal which differs materially from anything we find practically operative in any community, even in the church herself. At the heart of these verses, we recognize a conception of society governed by love and justice, where the laborer is not robbed of his wages or denied a fair share in the profits he has helped to create; where business is not conducted on the principle that accumulation of money is the chief end of man, and it may, therefore, be acquired by pillaging the unsuspect-

[1] 1 Cor. 16 : 14; Rom. 13 : 10; Heb. 13 : 3, 16; 1 Cor. 12 : 26; Rom. 14 : 15; James 2 : 14–16; Matt. 7 : 12; 1 Tim. 6 : 17–19; James 5 : 4; Jer. 22 : 13–15. (R. V.)

ing under form of law; where luxury and the enjoyment of the beautiful in the elegance of our surroundings are not secured by willfully or negligently inflicting wretchedness on the artisan; where affluence is not the exclusive possession of the few but is merely a trust to be expended on the welfare of the many; where sympathy is not evaporated into sentimentality but is condensed into practical measures for the prevention of every kind of bondage, whether to sovereigns or syndicates; where neighborliness is not embittered and outraged by petty scheming and dastardly tricks; and where brotherhood is no longer a name but a reality, determining human intercourse, fixing the terms of the science of human interests, and filling human life with the generous acts and sweet influences of self-sacrifice, purity, and peace.

As the book containing these provisions of what may be and should be was, from the beginning, committed to the church, we are warranted in concluding that they were designed for her instruction and inspiration; otherwise, there were no reason for their being given at all. I am aware that his grace of Peterborough has recently decided that society could not be constructed on the principles of the Sermon on the Mount; but I must crave indulgence to attach more importance to the testimony of Christ than to that of a bishop who probably was conscious, when he spoke, of the insuperable difficulty that exists in harmonizing the assumptions of a hierarchy with that view of social order which begins with the non-ecclesiastical beatitude, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." It seems irreverent to place our Saviour and his apostles in the position of solemn triflers, amusing the world with

impracticable and hazy notions of virtues and blessings which, the longer they are sought, fade away the more into the incoherent and intangible. That Jesus did not thus esteem his own teachings, and that he did not regard them as fanciful and unavailing, we have proof in the closing sentences of his memorable sermon: "Every one therefore, which heareth these words of mine, and doeth them,"—then they can be done,—"shall be likened unto a wise man which built his house upon the rock. And the rain descended and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon the rock."[1] According to this utterance, our Lord is so far from countenancing the English bishop's dictum that he actually intends us to understand that when individual men or communities of men build on what is condemned in the Sermon on the Mount, they are building on the unstable, the shifting, and the unenduring, a judgment which the world's history has unceasingly corroborated. Then it follows, if Christ meant his teachings to be taken seriously, they are certainly obligatory on his church; first, as the rule of her own life, and, secondly, as the aim of her intercourse with the world. She is bound to fulfill them in her own communion, to illustrate their working, and to demonstrate their feasibility; and she is bound to be governed by them in her relations with society beyond her own borders, and to seek their acceptance and adoption by society itself; and within the circle of these duties, we find the terms that define her social mission.

Dr. Baring-Gould reminds the students of Christianity that "theological writers have not laid sufficient stress

[1] Matt. 7 : 24–27.

on the great social revulsion with which the Jewish world was threatened by the teaching of Christ." "The public to whom Christ appealed has not been adequately considered," he writes, "nor has it been shown how large it was, how uneasy was its position." We all know that Jesus followed John, announcing, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand"; and that, from the expressed apprehension of the high priest, this movement was regarded as so revolutionary as to incite the Romans to "come and take away both our place and our nation."[1] As a means, therefore, of preserving the existing *régime*, and as a measure of public safety, the death of Christ was planned and carried into execution. While in this death, on the part of God, was involved the grace of sacrifice for the remission of sins, in it and by it the rulers of the Jewish State sought to consolidate and perpetuate the old order. They were conservatives fighting to the bitter end against the radicalism of the Galilean Prophet.

There are writers who seize this thought and are carried away by it into the misconception that the sole object of our Lord was to regenerate society, and who ignore the innumerable texts which point to his primary purpose in the conversion of the soul and in the reconciliation of man with God. I say *primary;* for the highest and truest social life springs from and is inseparable from spiritual relations and spiritual experiences. But while, in the apostolic literature, the mediatorial aspects of Christ's work may, on account of its fundamental character, receive more attention than the social, yet, as we have already seen, the latter was not in any

[1] John 11 : 48–50.

sense neglected. It is also true that, in the sub-apostolic period, the church did not lose sight of her temporal mission. She did attempt, weak as she was, to correct abuses, inaugurate reforms, and elevate the community, illustrating in her own administration how the world should organize itself in love and fraternity. Henry George held that it was her social side that arrayed against her the suspicion and the animosity of civil rulers. He writes

> The skeptical masters of Rome, tolerant of all gods, careless of what they deemed vulgar superstitions, were keenly sensitive to a doctrine based on equal rights ; they feared instinctively a religious belief that inspired slave and proletariat with a new hope ; that took for its central figure a wretched carpenter ; that taught the equal fatherhood of God and equal brotherhood of men ; that looked for the speedy reign of justice ; and that prayed, Thy kingdom come.

Imperialism could brook no rival and would permit no tampering with the corrupted and polluted springs of its magnificence ; and hence all of its tremendous strength was put forth to crush its assailant.

Notwithstanding this antagonism, the church witnessed many beneficent reforms in the decaying empire due to her labors and influence; and afterward, even when her vision had become somewhat dimmed by gazing too steadfastly into the face of worldly splendor, her sympathies went out toward the oppressed and suffering. Frequently there sounded among her sycophant tongues a voice like that of William Langland, pleading for New Testament social ideals, and praying:

> Poor people, thy prisoners, Lord, in the pit of mischief,
> Comfort thy creatures that much can suffer

> Through dearth, through drought, all their days here.
> Woe in winter times for wanting of clothes,
> And in summer time seldom sup to the full ;
> Comfort thy careful, Christ, in thy ryche,
> For how thou comfortest all creatures, clerks bear witness.

And when the reaction against priestcraft set in under Luther, with the Reformation came something like a renewal of the primitive Christian impulse to undertake the salvation of society. Startling theories were agitated; New Jerusalem doctrines were discussed; revolutionary upheavals on the part of peasants were inaugurated, some of them crude, ill-digested, premature, but all indicating that, in proportion as the church returns to the heart of Christ and comes nearer to the spirit of the gospel, she will necessarily be moved to seek the salvation of the temporal order as well as the spiritual regeneration of mankind.

Perhaps the saddest and most humiliating chapter in history is the one that records the falling away of the great body of the church from her vocation as the saviour of the world. This was a gradual descent. It was not a change in her convictions that led to the calamity. There is a sense in which she has never ceased to hold that she is necessary to the welfare of governments and ought to have a determining voice in their control; but her apostasy lay in transferring her interest from the poor to the rich, in seeking the favor of kings and not the advantage of the oppressed, in centering her affections on the lofty to the neglect of the lowly, in aspiring to rule in the State and above the State and by the corrupt policies of the State instead of converting the State, and in always and

unflinchingly striving to aggrandize herself and apparently not caring what becomes of the people at large. It is not to be doubted that many ecclesiastics who have been prominent in this departure from the spirit of the gospel have cherished the delusion that in this way they would finally succeed in making "the kingdoms of this world the kingdoms of God and his Christ"; but the results have shown that the course adopted is thoroughly pernicious and misleading, for it has rather corrupted and degraded "the kingdoms of this world" instead of elevating them, and has entirely unfitted them to be in any real sense the "kingdoms of God and his Christ."

That this summary of the declension of the church is not overdone may be proven by the satires contained in the buffoon literature of the medieval times, in one of which we have the following: "The pope said to the Romans: 'When the son of man shall come to the seat of your majesty, first say, Friend, for what hast thou come? but if he should persevere in knocking without giving you anything, cast him into utter darkness.'" Then having described how a poor man came to the door of the pope, pleading for help, he pens the answer supposed to be given: "Friend, thy poverty be with thee in perdition; get thee backward, Satan, for thou savourest not of those things which have the savour of money. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, thou shalt not enter into the joy of thy lord until thou shalt have given thy last farthing." [1] If further evidence were necessary, it may be gathered from John Ruskin's sorrowful account of the gradual deterioration which took place

[1] Wright, "History of Caricature," p. 172.

in the church, and which led to such depth of worldliness and to such neglect of the suffering people as to create at last a serious revolt among her own communicants. He concludes his survey with these words:

> But when every year that removed the truths of the gospel into deeper distance added to them some false or foolish tradition; when willful distortion was added to natural obscurity and the dimness of memory was disguised by the fruitfulness of fiction; when, however, the enormous temporal power granted to the clergy attracted into their ranks multitudes of men who, but for such temptation, would not have pretended to the Christian name, so that grievous wolves entered in among them, not sparing the flock; and when, by the machinations of such men and the remissness of others, the form and administration of church doctrine and discipline had become little worse than the means of aggrandizing the power of the priesthood—it was impossible any more for men of thoughtfulness or piety to remain in an unquestioning serenity of faith. The church had become so mingled with the world that its witness could no longer be received, and the professing members of it, who were placed in circumstances such as to enable them to become aware of its corruptions and whom their interest or their simplicity did not bribe or beguile into silence, gradually separated themselves into two vast multitudes of adverse energy, one tending to reformation and the other to infidelity.

Unfortunately, this condition of things was not brought to an end, either by the Reformation or by infidelity. The descent was too great and the gravitation downward too marked for a salutary change to be instantaneously possible. This pernicious worldliness was carried over even into the Reformation itself. The manifestations of desire on the part of the lowly to improve their temporal condition, which were sadly disfigured by certain grotesque theories, were rudely and

abruptly checked. Luther has as little sympathy with the peasants in their endeavors to secure the adoption of the famous "Twelve Articles," which meant the end of serfdom and the beginning of better social conditions, as the pope himself; and since his time, and down to our own day, it has been common for Protestants to speak in scorn of those poor children of toil who were striving for principles which are now, notwithstanding the sneers of unsympathetic clerical critics, recognized by the German State as sane, safe, and sound. Still, while it does not prevail so cruelly as formerly, there is much in modern Christianity to suggest that the apathy to social wrongs and social evils has not been entirely overcome and that the church, if waking up—as I believe she is—to her social mission, has not fully opened her eyes to its vastness and its nobility.

Nor is this true only of Roman Catholicism; it applies to the Greek Church and to Protestantism as well. Pobyedonostseff, procurator of the Holy Synod of Russia, sharply criticises the discrimination between rich and poor which he observes in England, and which always, wherever it is allowed, impairs the influence of the church with the people. After extolling his own communion for acknowledging no class distinction within the sanctuary, he proceeds:

> Enter an English church and watch the congregation. It is devout,—solemn, it may be,—but it is a congregation of ladies and gentlemen, each with a place specially reserved, the rich in separate and embellished pews like the boxes of an opera-house. We cannot help thinking that this church is merely a reunion of people in society and that there is place in it only for what society called the "respectable." . . How plainly these dispositions re-

veal the history of a feudal society. . . Nobility and gentry lead in all, because they possess and appropriate all. All is bought by conquest, even the right to sit in church. The celebration of divine service is a privilege sold at a fixed price.[1]

He admits, however, though apparently with reluctance, that this exclusiveness has been remarkably modified of late, and that caste does not, to the same extent as heretofore, impede the access of souls to the altars of God. I do not think he does full justice to the change that has taken place; and yet, in both England and America, there is room for greater improvement, and certainly there is in Russia, Pobyedonostseff himself being witness, for he states that his communion is "reproached with ignorance in its religion." We are told that "its faith is defiled by superstition"; and then he adds: "It suffers from corrupt and wicked practices; its clergy is rude, inactive, ignorant, and oppressed, without influence on its flocks." What is singular about this confession is the startling declaration that "these evils are in no way essential, but temporary and adventitious." Further on, he inquires: "What shall we say of the host of churches lost in the depths of the forests and in the immensity of the plains, where the people understand nothing from the trembling voice of the deacon and the muttering of the priest?" If we may answer this question, we would say that admitted ignorance, superstition, corruption, and wickedness unfit and disqualify the Russian Church for her sacred mission, reduce her below the level of the English Establishment when it was at its

[1] "A Russian Statesman," p. 207.

worst, and to a very great extent blunt the edge of her criticism. She, at least, cannot claim to be doing much, if anything, for the social betterment of the world; for, judged by the tenor of the procurator general's book, she regards progress as a malady and liberty as a crime. The martyred Stundists and martyred Spirit-wrestlers are the proofs of her indifference to human rights; and her priests spending the winters drunk upon the stove and the peasantry ignorant beyond credence are the unmistakable sign of her obtuseness to the most elementary demands of the religious spirit.

The Roman Catholic Church is in no small degree in the same condemnation. While she is as intent as ever on exercising political power, she rarely, if ever, goes out of her way to plead with sultans on behalf of massacred Armenians; to remonstrate with Spanish governments against cruel oppressions in Cuba; to rebuke race animosity, Jew-baiting, and military tyranny in France; or to imperil her influence with reigning dynasties and commercial autocracies by the indiscreet advocacy of social reforms. When popular movements have triumphed or are triumphing, so that it is evident they are independent of church support, she is ready to come on the scene with her blessing, as in the case of Leo XIII., who entered into amicable relations with freedom in France when its victory was assured, though his predecessor, Pio Nono, had characterized liberty, in his famous anti-progressionist encyclical, as a "delirious raving." In stating these things, we are not unmindful of the heroism of her priests and of her sisters of mercy in ministering to the suffering, or of her multiplied charities, or of her sacrifices on behalf of her own

supremacy; but even in her philanthropy, she is always prudent. She moves carefully, watchfully, in doing good. She has no great admiration for reformers like Father McGlynn, and she never seeks to be distinctly prominent in any agitations that contemplate radical changes in the present industrial system; and even were it worse than it is, she would assume no leadership for its reformation. Let Catholic nations all over the world be interrogated and their tattered condition and their unavailing cries for deliverance will fully confirm this indictment.

But the Protestant body itself is not exempt from participation in this neglect of the church's social mission. The large majority of its congregations, many of them in small towns and in rural districts, feel only a languid interest, if any interest at all, in the evils of modern society, and have no particular sense of obligation to attempt their cure. In the great cities, where these evils are felt more keenly, there is undoubtedly a deeper and a deepening solicitude for indispensable reforms. Signs of awakening are not absent in these vast centers where the extremes of life meet and reveal in their commingling the horrors of our civilization. Yet, even there, as we have been told by a truthful observer, the churches are regarded as too aristocratic, too capitalistic, and too individualistic in their leanings. While I am sure this suspicion may be carried too far and may lead biased persons to overlook the many congregations where aristocrats are conspicuous by their absence and where capitalists are as infrequent as angels, nevertheless there is ground for the allegation that there is no sufficient and adequate consciousness of

obligation for the social regeneration of the world, and that no comprehensive and commensurate measures and methods are as yet adopted for its accomplishment.

But, notwithstanding these deplorable failures, there are indications of an awakening—an awakening dating not merely from to-day but from yesterday and perhaps even from the day before yesterday. The long sleep is ending; the night of humiliation is drawing to an end. To many, it may seem that the church has been an unconscionably long time in getting her eyes wide open; while others, from what she has brought to pass in the way of temporal reform during the last hundred years, may hastily conclude that she is fully awake. She has indeed been slow to come to herself, and what I have said of her present attitude would not be true had she completely escaped from the spirit of slumber; and what she has wrought in the way of temporal benefits to society while emerging from her lethargic stupor is only the token and the pledge of what she is capable of doing when she has put an end, once for all, to its bondage. This, she is doing now; as yet perhaps slowly and timidly, but perceptibly and with increasing courage. There are multitudes of Catholic priests and Protestant pastors, and there are some religious guides in the Greek communion, who are growing more and more dissatisfied with the inequalities that exist in modern society and who feel that the church can no longer be even comparatively indifferent to the miseries that are cursing humble people. While the churches, as institutions, may not as yet be in sympathy with these representatives, they cannot always remain unaffected and unmoved by their zeal and enthusiasm. Already, we have college

settlements, institutional churches, federated philanthropic endeavors, salvation armies, slum missions on behalf of the neglected masses; and, already, we have reached a time when the meeting of a church congress without the discussion of social problems in relation to the obligations of Christianity is considered phenomenal and worthy of serious animadversion. There is more preaching than ever along these lines and more books from the pens of clergymen on these subjects than would have been considered possible twenty-five years ago.

But these are only superficial signs when they are put by the side of the new and unexampled attention which is being bestowed by theologians and sociological professors on the real significance of the "kingdom of heaven." This investigation and the conclusions being reached mean more than sympathetic and sporadic humanitarian efforts, however creditable; for they are restoring to the church a just conception of her temporal mission and are shutting her up, by the force, not of sentiment only, but of enlightened conviction, to the pressing necessity that exists for the adjustment of herself and her methods to its demands. This remarkable and undeniable indication of her social awakening ought not to be dismissed without further reflection.

It is reported of Mazzini, the noble Italian liberator, that he used to say:

> The first real faith that shall arise upon the ruins of the old, worn-out creeds, will transform the whole of our actual social organization; because the whole history of humanity is but the repetition in form and degree of the Christian's prayer, "Thy kingdom come: Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

This transformation, as we have seen, was contemplated by the Saviour from the beginning of the gospel, and what Mazzini predicted is to be effected, not so much by a new faith as by the just interpretation of the old; and toward such an interpretation schools, pulpits, and theological chairs have been devoting themselves with remarkable unanimity during the nineteenth century. Doctor Arnold, of Rugby, maintained that "the church is only another name for the State in its perfect development." What he meant was that "the ideal of each of these bodies merges in that of the other, as the State can only attain its true object, the highest welfare of man, when it acts with the wisdom and goodness of the church." However objectionable may be some features of this theory, Arnold is evidently, in this conception, struggling to express the Christian idea of the kingdom. The same may be said of Rev. J. Baldwin Brown's views in his paper on "The Christian Commonwealth," where he regards the religious life of the community as substantially the same as the religious life of the individual. His doctrine is really sympathetic with that of Stahl, of Germany, with which Bunsen agrees, that the State is, or ought to be, the kingdom of God. Dean Fremantle, also, has insisted on a similar explanation.[1] Rothe argues, with considerable force, that the mission of Christianity is to create a universal State, ruled by its own governing ideals. Kliefoth declares that it is her business to leaven the nations with her own principles and life; and Martensen, in his "Ethics," identifies the kingdom of God with the highest good. The Ritschlian theory has been expounded by Professor Ore for

[1] "Gospel of the Secular Life."

the benefit of English readers. Its essential features are thus set forth:

> The idea of the kingdom of God . . . is that of a universal moral union of men, of which the distinguishing mark is reciprocal action from the motive of love. . . It is, we are told over and over, the name for that union of men for moral duty from the motive of love which is the self-end [*Selbstzweck*] and final end [*Endzweck*] of God in the creation of the world.[1]

Then we have the quotation from Ritschl himself:

> If, accordingly, the creation and guidance of the world are to be apprehended as the means for the building up of created spiritual natures, viz, men, into a kingdom of God in the community of Christ, then the religious view of the world in Christianity is the means of the solution of the world-problem generally, and the mark which this religion bears upon itself of a particular historical origin is no hindrance to its including within itself the universal destination of the human race.[2]

To me, however, this is only a mere philosophical and roundabout way of saying with Cobden, "My politics are the politics of the Sermon on the Mount"; for all definitions, however abstruse in their phraseology, point to the regeneration of the social State and to the predominance of Christ's social ideas as its architectonic form and life.

By the multiplication of these definitions and by the increased attention given to the kingdom of God, the church is educating her own intelligence and conscience; and very soon it will be impossible for her any longer to preserve her own self-respect if she fails to undertake the revitalizing and reconstructing of society. Her most

[1] "*Anfange der Christlichen Kirche.*"

[2] "The Ritschlian Theology," pp. 119, 121.

eminent teachers are unfolding, in almost identical terms, her duty, and they are doing so in a way that is entirely free from sensationalism, demagogism, and fanaticism, and it were, indeed, a sadly surprising thing, were it conceivable that she could or would obstinately continue in its criminal neglect.

This awakening of the mind of the church, to which I attach so much importance, has followed, and perhaps necessarily so, various attempts of her children during the past hundred years to abate crying wrongs and to correct social abuses. While she, as an organization, may frequently have stood aloof from these benevolent and beneficent movements; and while, at times, some of her members may have disavowed sympathy with them and may have denounced their promoters, nevertheless, it is cause of congratulation and a sign auspicious for the future, that many of her communicants were intimately allied to their origin and labored ardently for their success. Though the rock was hard and forbidding, it became the mother of cooling and refreshing waters; and though the vast city of the dead remained unmoved, nevertheless it relaxed enough to permit a few of the saints, as it were, to rise with Jesus from the tomb. Thus has it always been; and in periods of deepest gloom, and when ecclesiastical organizations have been farthest from the spirit of the gospel, God has ever had his Elijah and the faithful seven thousand who would not bow the knee to Baal. A Chrysostom was raised up in the days when a plotting and effeminate court in Constantinople was corrupting the heart of Christianity while it was decorating the body with Eastern magnificence. When the crisis

came, a Wycliffe appeared within the church for her reformation in England, a Huss in Bohemia, a Savonarola in Italy, a Luther in Germany, and, in these last times, a plain, unvarnished man, Dwight L. Moody, the burden of whose ministry toward its close was the emancipation of the church of Christ from worldliness. The Almighty has never been without his witnesses in the earth; and even when the body of the elect has been wandering after strange gods, he has never failed to discover an Isaiah or Ezekiel to condemn apostasy and prepare the way for nobler and better things.

It is not uncommon to credit the Oxford Movement with the inspiration of recent humane activities. Attention is called to the Chartist uprising in 1848, and in some degree it has been attributed to the spirit of self-renunciation manifested in the discourses of Newman; but without in the least detracting from the merits of the new catholicism, or desiring in any way to disparage the efforts of such men as Lamennais, Frederick Denison Maurice, Charles Kingsley, Thomas Hughes, Montalembert, and Lacordaire, who are the representatives of a broader school, the religious humanitarianism of this century must be assigned an earlier date.

Personally, I rejoice to think of its dawning in connection with the beginnings of the Sunday-school cause in Great Britain. When, in 1780, Robert Raikes, a Gloucester printer, gathered a few children of that cathedral town in Sooty Alley and began to instruct them in cleanliness, in the elements of education, and in the fear of the Lord, the promise of a kindlier age was born. Let it not be forgotten that while this philanthropy was not of the church direct, and was not with-

out opposition from some church dignitaries, it yet had its origin within the church and affords an illustration of the truth that the spirit of Christianity has always found many difficulties in the way of its moral expression.

Not altogether prepossessing, or suggestive of saintship, the person of Robert Raikes as portrayed in the graphic account of his career furnished by Mr. J. Henry Harris; but if his works are to be taken as the measure of his worth and piety, then his name is entitled to rank high in the hagiology of God's kingdom. Of him and the commencement of his enterprise, Dean Farrar writes in these sympathetic words:

> He saw the little, dirty, neglected children, with the pitiable "slum-born" look written on their faces, singing lewd or brutal songs and rioting in vice and ignorance, on Sundays, in the streets of the cathedral city. Was he to be content with the faithless acquiescent plea that "What is everybody's duty is nobody's duty"? On the contrary, he asked himself, "Can nothing be done?" A voice within him said, "Try." "I did try," he says; and see what God has wrought. An experiment which now looks so simple and so humble as that of trying to lure these ragged children of wretchedness to the cathedral services, and paying some poor woman a shilling a day to teach them, resulted not only in a marked improvement in morals among the children of Gloucester and a general amendment of the condition of the city, but in the gradual imitation of his example in thousands of other places.[1]

At the beginning, it does not appear that Robert Raikes was supremely concerned for the eternal salvation of the boys and girls, but was solicitous for their social betterment. He had their temporal welfare at

[1] Introduction to Harris' "Robert Raikes."

heart. For a quarter of a century before the experiment in Sooty Alley,

> He had been actively engaged in attempting to make the condition of criminals, and of poor debtors, who were treated as criminals, endurable. He attempted to improve the adult and to reach the child through the parent. This very old plan failed in his case ; . . he therefore did what a few had done before him, . . . he commenced with the children.

To-day, we are informed by statistics that there are upward of twenty millions of young people in the Sunday-schools of Great Britain and America; and gratifying as these figures are from a purely religious standpoint, they are almost equally so from the standpoint of humanitarianism. They signify that while the spiritual life is being cared for, the body and its needs are neither ignored nor neglected; for wherever children are collected in these schools, signs are not lacking of the interest taken in their temporal welfare. Many receive gifts of clothes; many are guarded from vicious influences in degraded homes; and many form intimacies which have a salutary effect on their entire career. Childhood was never more sacred in the world's history than it is now, and never was so much undertaken to promote its interests. That much remains to be done goes without the saying; and that crimes against innocence and helplessness are yet altogether too common cannot be denied; but if children, particularly the children of the poor, are treated more like human beings than they were a hundred years ago; and if there are "homes" and "feasts" for bootblacks and newsboys; and if there are refuges for waifs, and free schools; and if the hours of toil have been reduced and better treatment secured,

it is largely due and primarily due to the institution of the Sabbath-school.

But if Robert Raikes may be regarded in a very real sense as the harbinger of modern religious humanitarianism, he had a notable successor in Anthony Ashley Cooper, the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, whose abundant labors on behalf of the wretched entitle him to be classed among the foremost benefactors of mankind. Of him, the Duke of Argyle testified in the upper chamber of Parliament: "My Lords and Gentlemen: All the great reforms of the past fifty years have been brought about, not by the Liberal party, nor by the Tory party, but by the labors of one man, the Earl of Shaftesbury." He might have added that, though they were born of the Christian spirit, they were not accomplished by the Christian church, which, unhappily, was sometimes found to be in antagonism. Nevertheless, let us not forget that Shaftesbury, like John Howard and Clarkson, was a devout and humble follower of our Lord. If the church has not led, and if she has blindly opposed, the heart of Christ in her members has wrought great things and prepared the way for her ultimate awakening. When this eminent man was offered a place in the government, he replied: "I cannot satisfy myself that to accept office is a divine call; but I am satisfied that God has called me to labor among the poor." Later on, in similar circumstances, he said: "One million and six hundred thousand operatives are still excluded from the benefits of the factory acts; and so long as they are unprotected, I cannot take office."

From such a spirit, much might be expected; and his life did not belie the promise of his words. His

first important speech in Parliament was on behalf of the lunatics, whose condition early in this century was deplorable. They were dealt with most cruelly. Many of them were chained to walls in dark cells, had no other bed than a truss of straw, and were visited by keepers, whip in hand, who lashed them into submission. Some patients were bound in wells, and the water made to rise until it reached their chin. Women were flogged as well as men, were confined in iron cages, were whirled at frightful speed in rotary chairs, and were often exposed in all their agony and degradation to the eyes of the curious. To have been instrumental in abolishing these tortures and the system that rendered them possible was enough to endear the name of the heroic friend of humanity to all ages. But Shaftesbury's labors went farther. In 1833 he began the great work of factory legislation, and specially concerned himself for the deliverance from the curse of industrial slavery. With the invention of machinery, a demand for child-labor was created. Large numbers of children were sent from the workhouses of great cities and placed in mills as apprentices, and a horrible traffic was inaugurated. Jobbers scoured the country and bought up children, and these were handed over to factories, where multitudes perished under the toil and the punishments ordained by remorseless taskmasters. While England was aflame with zeal for the abolition of African slavery, she was indifferent to the bondage and degradation of her own white children. In one of his addresses, Earl Shaftesbury reminded the House that, "when in its wisdom and mercy it decided that forty-five hours in a week was a term of labor long enough for an adult Negro, it

would not now be unbecoming to consider whether sixty-nine hours a week were not too many for the children of the British Empire."[1] After weary and anxious disputations, not unmixed with many adverse criticisms, the children's friend succeeded in at least ameliorating their condition. He also did much for the benefit of miners and other laborers whose pursuits exposed them to peculiar hardships; and we may gain an idea of the difficulties he had to overcome and of his loneliness in his humane undertakings from a few of his own recorded experiences and impressions. He writes:

In few instances did any mill-owner appear on the platform with me; in still fewer the ministers of any religious denomination, at first not one except the Rev. Mr. Bull, of Brierly, near Bradford; and even to the last, very few: so cowed were they (or in themselves so indifferent) by the overwhelming influence of the cotton lords. . . I had more aid from the medical than the divine profession. . . Last night pushed the bill through committee; a feeble and discreditable opposition! "Sinners" were with me, "saints" against me—strange contradiction in human nature. . . . Bill passed through the committee last night. In this work, which should have occupied one hour, they spent nearly six, and left it far worse than they found it; never have I seen such a display of selfishness, frigidity to every human sentiment, such ready and happy self-delusion. Three bishops only present, Chichester (Gilbert), Norwich (Stanley), Gloucester (Monk), who came late, but he intended well. The Bishop of London and the Archbishop of Canterbury went away! It is my lot, should I, by God's grace live so long, to be hereafter among them; but may he avert the day on which my means of utility in public life would be forever concluded![2]

We could have wished that these reforms had been

[1] Bingham, "Life of Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury." [2] *Ibid.*

formally and officially inspired by the church. Still, orginating as they did among her children, they may be regarded as symptomatic of an unconscious restlessness that would bring her ultimately to a sense of her responsibility. This becomes more apparent in the agitations which led to the abolition of slavery in various parts of the world. In these, the church seemed to come more rapidly to an appreciation of her duty toward the oppressed than in other movements. She found her conscience quickly in England and America, and in America, South as well as North, was influenced by it before the admission of Missouri (1820) into the Union as a Slave State, and up to the alleged tremendous discovery made by Rev. James Smylie about 1833, that American slavery was sanctioned by the word of God. That one man put back the cause of civilization some thirty years, and prepared the way for the devastations and misery of civil war. What a contrast between this Presbyterian preacher and Thomas Clarkson, who, in a Latin essay discussed before the University of Cambridge (1785) the question, "Is Involuntary Servitude Justifiable?" He maintained that it was morally unlawful; but as he was returning home to London, he was confronted by his own conclusion, and was agitated in his mind by the very direct interrogation that could not be averted: "If the slave trade be an iniquity, is it not my duty to fight against it?" There was only one possible answer to such a soul as his. He plunged into the conflict. Soon he was joined by Granville Sharpe, William Wilberforce, and Zachary Macaulay; and before they died, they had the joy of knowing that they had saved England from "the guilt of using the

arm of freedom to rivet the fetters of the slave." On the other hand, this Smylie, by his astounding discovery, obscured the moral judgment of a great people, became the leader in the blackest apostasy of our times, and precipitated a nation into a war which, for suffering and for expenditure in blood and treasure, has few parallels in the history of the world. As we recall his name for a moment, we may be excused for quoting from Whittier concerning such as he:

> Just God!—and these are they
> Who minister at thine altar, God of right!
> Men who their hands with prayer and blessing lay
> On Israel's ark of light!
>
> What! servants of thy own
> Merciful Son, who came to seek and save
> The homeless and the outcast,—fettering down
> The tasked and plundered slave!

But neither he nor they were representative of the best life of the church in these dark times. Before the enormity of the iniquity, even her conservatism at last gave way; and while not a few of her eminent clergy, whose interests were closely identified with "the peculiar institution," upheld its existence, her heart could not endure the sighing of the bondsmen and revolted from the stories of escaping slaves, of bloodhounds, whipping-posts, and female dishonor. The moral convulsion through which she passed was an omen of better things. She never could be again altogether as she had been. Her sleep had been more than disturbed. She began to rub her eyes—to think.

May I not here speak in terms of highest admiration

of two leaders in America, Theodore Parker and Henry Ward Beecher, who had much to do in compelling her to think? Neither of these great preachers was regarded as entirely orthodox in his respective communion. The Unitarian clergy hesitated to follow Parker in some of his theological views, which led Dr. Channing to exclaim, "Now we have a Unitarian orthodoxy!" and not a few evangelical ministers were equally embarrassed by Beecher's doctrinal opinions. But when they raised their voices against slavery, it was as a trumpet blast commanding at once the attention of all parties and of all schools of religious opinion. They were veritable "Sons of Thunder." Notwithstanding the suspicion and prejudice that assailed them, they carried conviction with them and startled multitudes of professed Christians out of their apathy. They made multitudes in the church and beyond the church conscious of the barbarity and infamy of slavery, and, in a very real sense, were the leaders in the crusade for its overthrow.

Curiously enough, Governor Oglethorpe, in the short-lived constitution of the earliest colonial government of Georgia, 1736, provided not only for the prohibition of slavery but for the prohibition of spirituous liquors as well. He appears to have discerned an affinity between these two evils; and the church, during these later days, has felt very much as he did. As she became more opposed to chattel-slavery, she became more convinced that slavery to strong drink was a similar curse; and hence, from 1826, when the American Society for the Promotion of Temperance was formed, to the present, she has been becoming more and more sensible of the ruinous effects of alcohol and more and more trou-

bled about their prevalence and continuance. Organization has followed organization for the suppression of drunkenness and for the emancipation of humanity from the power of senseless appetite. Several of these concerted movements have originated among those who did not claim to act in the name of Christianity; but others, and in my opinion the most potent, have from the first acknowledged the influence of Christ and his Spirit. Among these pre-eminence must be given to the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, which was born of the fiery crusade which startled Ohio, women invading liquor saloons and praying there for God to arrest the devilish traffic, and which gave to the cause one peerless leader in the person of Frances E. Willard. The good accomplished by this vast organization is incalculable; and though the difficulties in its way are yet enormous, it seems more than probable that ultimate victory will crown its labors and sacrifices. Thus the church, by the humanitarian efforts of her individual members, has been shaken out of her apathy; has been overtaken by a profound dissatisfaction with her own apparent impotence; and has been led into those inquiries relative to the nature of the kingdom of heaven on earth which are compelling her to realize the character and greatness of her social mission.

To what special services, to what particular duties, do these inquiries seem to point? What fields for immediate husbandry do they open up, what enterprises and undertakings do they naturally prompt? They certainly call for a more thorough application of the principles of the kingdom to the life and organization of the church herself. I have already suggested that

the New Testament contemplates that she herself shall furnish an example of what society as a whole should be; that she shall illustrate and present a working model of the ultimate rule of Christ in the world at large. When one comes announcing a new social order, all persons interested have a right to demand a reasonable demonstration of its feasibility; and if that is not forthcoming, they may be excused if they entertain serious doubts of its practicality. How is conviction to be created, if not by proof? and how are men and women to be drawn to a novel way, if no one takes pains to show its advantages over the path they are treading? Professors of religion have never, unless in the primitive age of the church and among a few obscure communities that have occasionally attempted to revive primitive piety, realized fully the wisdom and necessity of this course. They have announced millenniums when the world shall be converted, and golden days on earth when the race shall love God; but they have not worked out the millennial ideal among themselves, nor given us a specimen of what the Golden Era will be like. And yet they claim to be converted. They profess to be new creatures in Christ Jesus. I am not saying that their average morality is not higher than that which obtains among worldly people; neither am I denying to many among them exalted motives and self-sacrificing devotion. I am the friend of the church and not her enemy. Take her all in all and she has never been matched by any other society on earth; but only the blindest kind of adulation would ever dream of affirming that we see in her to-day what Christ has purposed as the final perfection of human society. The

millennium glory must surely transcend both her holiness and her happiness. What littleness often disfigures her plans! What meagreness of view and of gift frequently degrades her enterprises! What petty jealousies and factional fights repeatedly disturb her peace! A church misunderstanding is the dread of every thoughtful soul, because of the unreasonableness, obstinacy, and bitterness it usually develops. In a few hours, the work of years will be undone by irascible, irresponsible, and irresolute counsels. What is most horrible about these quarrels is that they seem to possess the fatal power of quickening the latent cunning and maliciousness of man's nature; and the most devilish methods are invoked, in the name of the Lord, to achieve a partisan victory. I have known ministers to be ruined by the machinations of virulent foes; I have known worthy people by the score to exile themselves from their home church to escape the monstrous assumptions of some office-bearers; and I have known the minutes of a church record to be expunged, that the tortuous scheming of a "leading brother" might never rise against him. I have seen so much that is humiliating and appalling, and have learned so much of the black doings of the Holy Office, of the Roman *Curia*, and of Oxford deceptions, that I would rather brave a tempest any day, or face a flaming battery of artillery, than undertake to deal with excited Christians who are plotting against each other.

But even when cataclysms are avoided, the calm is not exactly what it ought to be. Inequalities at times are painfully apparent. Matrons take very little interest in the social well-being of young women, and occa-

sionally put obstacles in the way of their helping themselves, or discourage them by their pin-prick criticisms. Fathers and prominent business men do not usually concern themselves about the needs and prospects of young Christian men. They come to their pews, do what they call "worship God," and manifest no special interest in their youthful brother. Fraternity, while openly professed, is not always practised as it should be; and he who relies on it to assist him in the evil day will often be disappointed. While, in all of these respects, the life of the church is higher and nobler than the life of the world; and while it affords here and and there glimpses of an earnest endeavor to conform to our Lord's ideal; and while these endeavors are becoming more frequent, nevertheless, looking on it as it is even now, may not the observer be excused if he wonders whether what he sees is really what Christ meant by the kingdom of heaven, and doubts whether the adoption by society of the current church life would advance it much farther on the way to peacefulness and happiness?

> And is this little all that was to be?
> Where is the gloriously decisive change,
> The immeasurable metamorphosis
> Of human clay to divine gold, we looked
> Should in some poor sort justify the price?
> Had a mere adept of the Rosy Cross
> Spent his life to consummate the Great Work,
> Would we not start to see the stuff it touched
> Yield not a grain more than the vulgar got
> By the old smelting process years ago?
> If this were sad to see in just the sage
> Who should profess so much, perform no more,

> What is it when suspected in that Power
> Who undertook to make and made the world,
> Devised and did effect man, body and soul,
> Ordained salvation for them both, and yet—
> Well, is the thing we see salvation?

It is the immediate business of the church to answer No, and to answer in the accents of practical reform. She has purged herself from many gross evils that afflicted her in the eighteenth century; she has in some respects advanced in righteousness and benevolence during the present century; but it remains for her to undertake the complete realization in every detail of her communion of what the kingdom of heaven is, according to the teachings of its King. Until she does this, her social influence will necessarily be curtailed and impaired. "Show us just what you mean," will be the cry that will constantly impede her benevolent exertions when seeking to rescue cities and towns from their mischievous methods. She must first be the kingdom of God herself, if she is to succeed in establishing the kingdom of God where now the empire of darkness reigns. Were I, therefore, asked, what is the most important and indispensable thing for the church to undertake, now that she is waking up to her social mission? my answer would simply be, *Let her at once herself become what she desires the world to be.* This is the first step: but it is not the last.

Her attention must not be exclusively concentrated on herself, not even on her own perfection. She must look without and beyond, as well as within. Nor could she illustrate the spirit of the kingdom in any other way. If its genius is altruistic, then she will be dis-

closing in part its essential nature by thoughtful regard for the needs of the suffering, the helpless, and the degraded. This, to some extent, she has done and is still doing in her growing antagonism to the liquor traffic. Leo XIII. has described the total abstinence pledge as "a noble resolve worthy of all commendation," and has stated that "drink drags down numberless souls to perdition." Cardinal Manning declared that the principal thing he had learned during thirty-five years in London was that "the chief bar to the working of the Holy Spirit in the souls of men is intoxicating drink." And the Earl of Shaftesbury used this decisive language: "It is absolutely impossible, permanently or considerably, to relieve poverty until we have got rid of the drink curse." Mr. Charles Booth, the eminent statistician, regards it as "the most prolific of all the causes of misery and wretchedness." How can it be otherwise? Think for a moment on the fact that the working classes in Great Britain spend annually on this pernicious superfluity £70,000,000. Can we not understand what John Bright meant when he said, could such waste as this be averted, England would speedily become a blooming Eden? The more that is human of this evil, the more difficult it is to conceive of the possible regeneration of society until it is suppressed.

Consider some pathetic and instructive figures. In a single year, one person in every thirty was arrested in Liverpool for drunkenness; one in every thirty-eight, in Manchester; one person in twenty-four, in Dublin; while in New York, some fifty thousand cases were reported by the police, and twenty-six thousand one hun-

dred and fifty-seven in Boston. "In some parts of London, there is one public-house for every thirty-nine other houses; and in some parts of Dublin, there is one for every twenty-five. It has been calculated that the public-houses of Dublin, if placed side by side and allowed a frontage of seven yards each, would form a street five miles long."[1] Ireland spends about eleven millions sterling a year for liquor, being more than the entire rental of the country, and then wonders at her continued impecuniousness. Boston licenses nine hundred and ninety-two saloons, and some localities she seems intent on ruining by their multiplication. Within a radius of one thousand feet, there are, in a Roxbury neighborhood, eighteen saloons, sixteen druggists, and three groceries where liquor can be obtained. When sixteen of these rum-holes had been established, the citizens pleaded that no more might be opened; but the commissioners straightway added two more to the list. As a result of this concentration, property has declined in value, and moral deterioration has set in. This case is very instructive. It shows how little help may be expected for necessary reforms from the officials of communities as enlightened as the capital of New England. What avail our efforts and the heroic endeavors of Salvation Armies to clean up districts and destroy social plague-spots, if the representatives of municipal order go to work and create them in some other part of the town? This is what is being done in Roxbury. There is not a saloon on Commonwealth Avenue or on Beacon Street, whose dwellers are no more total abstainers than they are a little farther off; why, then, are

[1] Nicholas, "Christianity and Socialism," pp. 172–174.

eighteen saloons considered necessary within a radius of one thousand feet in another neighborhood? The property owners do not desire them, the heads of families deplore them; but the authorities go on just the same rendering the locality darker and more wretched. Is there no relief from such manifest disregard of the well-being of a community? Opportunity is offered here for united action on the part of all Christian denominations. By and by they will be criticised for not stamping out slum conditions; but why should they attempt the task, when reputable municipal officials will speedily lend themselves to the development of the same conditions elsewhere? This struggle between the citizens and the commissioners brings into relief the truth that the liquor business is illegitimate, a destroyer of prosperity, and a corrupter of morals. Between it and the church enduring peace is impossible. Either the church or the saloon must go. If the church does not exterminate the saloon, the saloon will exterminate the church. If she falters in her antagonism, not only is the world lost but she is lost as well. No changes in the industrial system, no abrogation of trusts, no advance in wages, will permanently help society, so long as the liquor traffic continues as it is and city officials co-operate with it in impoverishing the people, impairing the value of property, and in developing new centers of vice and crime.

The proper housing of the poor is another practical measure that is entitled to the heartiest support of the church. What kind of home does our civilization afford the workman? This is a question worthy of serious thought; for if we are influenced by our environment,

what must be the effect of overcrowding and of inadequate sanitation? It is reported that twenty-two per cent. of Scottish families still dwell in a single room; and in the case of Glasgow, the proportion rises to thirty-three per cent. "Altogether, there are in Glasgow over one hundred and twenty thousand, and in all Scotland five hundred and sixty thousand, persons who do not know the decency of even a two-roomed house."[1] In favorable comparison with this condition of things, the number of families inhabiting single rooms in Boston is only one thousand and fifty-three, or less than one and one-half per cent. as against Glasgow's thirty-three per cent. "Out of a total of six million one hundred and thirty-one thousand and one separate tenements enumerated in England and Wales in 1891, two hundred and eighty-six thousand nine hundred and forty-six or four and sixty-eight one hundredths per cent. consisted of one room only, and these contained no fewer than six hundred and forty thousand four hundred and ten persons or two and two-tenths per cent. of the whole population, with the high average of two and twenty-three one hundredths persons per room." In certain portions of New York, this overcrowding is carried to a dangerous limit; and it is surprising how much of it exists in smaller communities and in various parts of the civilized world. What this herding of human beings means has, perhaps, never been more vividly expressed than by Carlyle in a striking passage from "Sartor Resartus":

> Oh, under that hideous coverlit of vapours, and putrefactions, and unimaginable gases, what a fermenting-vat lies simmering and hid! The joyful and sorrowful are there; men are dying

[1] Sidney Webb, "Labour in the Longest Reign."

there ; men are being born ; men are praying. On the other side of a brick partition men are cursing ; and around them all is the vast, void night. . . Wretchedness cowers into truckle-beds, or shivers hunger-stricken into its lair of straw. . . Riot cries aloud, and staggers and swaggers in his rank dens of shame ; and the mother, with streaming hair, kneels over her pallid, dying infant, whose cracked lips only her tears now moisten. All these heaped and huddled together, with nothing but a little carpentry and masonry between them ; crammed in like salted fish in their barrel ; or weltering, shall I say, like an Egyptian pitcher of tamed vipers, each struggling to get its head above the others ; such work goes on under that smoke-counterpane.

To some persons this speech will seem hysterical or over-rhetorical; for there is to-day a demand that everything like color be effaced from serious composition. And yet it is possible that this craving for simplicity is not inspired by a refined taste calling for a pure style in literature, when there is so much of the garish rhetorical and flamboyant in the decorations, displays, and luxuries of society; but rather may be due to the strong grip the commonplace has upon modern civilization, which always tends to cramp literary genius, and which likewise tends to repress fervent sympathy on behalf of the distressed.

But, however Carlyle's language may be criticised, I can bear witness from personal observation that his description lies well within the boundaries of fact. I have visited the squalid tenements where so many millions of our fellow-beings are housed, in London, Paris, New York, Madrid, Boston, and Glasgow, and can report that, until a change is brought about; until the shivering, wizened girls and tattered and profane boys, who are old in cunning before they are conscious of inno-

cence, are taken away from back courts and stenching rooms; and until conditions for decent living can be furnished to adults, and the close-packed buildings where obscenity, filth, and immorality are fostered shall cease to darken earth and insult the light,—no reasonable hope can be entertained of permanent social regeneration.

But what can the church do? She can protest. More than that, she can appeal to her millionaires to leave college building alone for a while and devote their business sagacity and tact and money to the more crying need of the masses for cleaner, fresher, more commodious, and more attractive dwellings. Higher education is of vast importance; but I venture to assert of higher moment still, as touching the health and moral life of the population, is the erection of houses suitable for homes,—homes being next to impossible in bad-smelling, ill-ventilated, fever-breeding one-room tenements. Moreover, she can encourage her own members to combine in helping the poor to secure improved accommodations. Her missionaries, when they penetrate tenement districts, can carry information to their inhabitants that will put them on their guard and arouse in them a desire for better surroundings and even unite them in demanding fairer treatment from their landlords; and if she is herself the possessor of such property, she is under obligation to Christ not to use it as one great church corporation has used such a trust in New York,—to make all the money she can,—but to illustrate how tenants should be dealt with and the care that should be taken in providing them with dwellings free from objectionable and disgusting features.

But when these measures have been advocated and these and similar reforms have been entered on, there yet remains the duty of socializing industry and commerce. By the word "socializing" I do not mean in full what State socialists mean when they employ the term; not the organization of labor after the pattern of a military establishment, and entailing many of the evils which render militarism an unmitigated curse, but rather a voluntary and free combination and pooling of interests in which capital and labor come to a more equal share in profits than is seemingly possible under the present system. Public ownership of some franchises now enjoyed by corporations may also be demanded by this ideal; for the ideal is irreconcilable with every method by which a few favored individuals can become enormously wealthy at the expense of the helpless many. No government has the moral right to invest a company of men with powers which enable them to coin money out of the needs of the people, and which practically doom the people to suffering or to unquestioning acquiescence in their exactions. But whether collectivism is indispensable to the success of co-operation, circumstances will speedily demonstrate. In the meanwhile, it is becoming more and more evident that only changes along the line of co-operation can allay the growing discontent and harmonize the conflicting claims of capital and industry.

De Tocqueville, with his usual penetration, has said: "When the people are overwhelmed with misery, they are resigned. It is when they begin to hold up their heads and to look above them that they are impelled to insurrection." They have reached that point in various

lands, particularly where the Saxons, the Teutons, and the Americans rule. Sixty years ago, their condition was immeasurably more deplorable and desperate than it is to-day. Wages have increased almost fifty per cent. in the great centers of civilization, the hours of toil have been reduced, and available comforts multiplied. The working classes have been able to save millions of money, and they are more respected and better educated than they were half a century gone. But these gains, which have benefited so many, have tended to make the masses conscious of their right to more, and they seem only to have rendered more palpable the grievous inequalities which still exist.

Canon Westcott goes farther than this, and adds :

> The silent revolution which has taken place within the century in the methods of production and distribution has terribly intensified the evils which belong to all late forms of civilization. The great industries have cheapened luxuries and stimulated the passion for them. They have destroyed the human fellowship of craftsman and chief. They have degraded trade in a large degree into speculation. They have deprived labor of its thoughtful freedom, and turned men into "hands." They have given capital a power of dominion and growth perilous above all to its possessor.[1]

It is the fact that multitudes of the common people are intelligent enough to perceive and understand these damaging and discouraging features of the present industrial system, that breeds and foments widespread dissatisfaction. Let any one read Robert Blatchford's "Merrie England," if he would ascertain how extensive the spirit of unrest is, and how well informed. This

[1] "Social Aspects of Christianity."

little book will be a revelation to those who have never thought seriously over the problems of their times. While it is inflammatory in its utterances, it is mainly righteous, and, in its cry for social salvation, faithfully represents the aspirations of the neglected masses. The reader closing its pages very likely will conclude, with the Bishop of Rochester, that "the zones of enormous wealth and degrading poverty, unless carefully considered, will presently generate a tornado which, when the storm clears, may leave a good deal of wreckage behind." The premonitory gusts of such a tornado he may detect in William Morris' "March of the Workers," which is itself a sign of the times:

O ye rich men, hear and tremble! for with words the sound is rife;
Once for you and death we labor, changed henceforward is the strife;
We are men, and we shall battle for the world of men and life,
And our host is marching on.

Is it war then? Will ye perish as the dry wood on the fire?
Is it peace? Then be ye of us, let your hope be our desire.
Come and live! for life awaketh, and the world shall never tire,
And hope is marching on.

It is the mission of the church to avert the tempest by seeking to harmonize its threatening and mutually antagonistic elements; but if she is to do anything effective, she must realize at the outset that the issue involved is *au fond* an economic one, and is not primarily sentimental or religious. Adam Smith, a hundred years ago, taught the world how wealth could be accumulated, and the lesson has been thoroughly learned;

but to-day the world needs to learn how wealth should be distributed, and until adequate instruction is furnished on this point it will be true, as Lord Beaconsfield declared, that the unequal distribution of the fruits of industry will divide every nation into "two nations," and they will differ widely from each other in enlightenment, safety, and happiness. Nothing, however, will be accomplished in this direction, and no great economist will feel free to speak, if we assume that the existing way of carrying on production and the prevailing notions of what is due to capital are too venerable and sacred to be challenged. Some persons, I know, speak of them with hushed breath, as though they were, in a deeply mysterious sense, of divine origin and as imperative as the commandments of the Decalogue. We are solemnly warned to be careful not to jeopardize their authority, and to see to it that we hallow and reverence the "laws of trade," which are assumed to be as wonderful and undebatable as the laws of nature; and yet the industrial system of to-day is comparatively a novelty. It was developed from the ruins of feudalism and received its dominant impress from the commercial revolution that followed the inventions of the spinning-jenny, the spinning-machine, and the steam-engine. Its founders are in reality Hargreave, Arkwright, and Watt; its spirit is selfishness; and its aim, the accumulation of wealth. If, therefore, it does not serve the true ends of progress, the sooner it is broken up the better; and in bringing it to a termination, no apologies need be offered. It is of yesterday, and the world may finally part with it to-morrow without regret and without the least self-reproach.

A substitute is slowly being prepared for it in the co-operative movement, whose birthplace was Rochdale, England, and whose growth, from its original membership of some twenty-eight poor weavers to over a million now enrolled, dividing a profit last year of £7,000,000, is one of the marvels of the century. It has extended its area and now embraces France, Germany, Italy, and Belgium. All that has been accomplished has been wrought since 1844, and in the face of virulent antagonism not yet altogether ended. Thus far, the triumphs achieved by this new industrial method have occurred in the department of distribution and not to any great extent in that of production. It is assumed that its principle will not work in the latter. Such a judgment, however, is premature. Co-operation at present cannot command the amount of capital requisite for large ventures, and it has slowly to make its way against conservatism and "vested interests." It is gradually accumulating capital, its leaders are studying the various problems to be solved and the perplexing conditions to be met in production, and it is reasonable to expect that ultimately their endeavors will be crowned with success. But though we may have to wait awhile for the fruit of their labors, they are moving in the right direction. John S. Mill wrote, several years ago:

> The form of association which, if mankind continue to improve, must be expected in the end to predominate, is not that which can exist between a capitalist as chief and work-people without a voice in the management, but the association of the laborers themselves on terms of equality, collectively owning the capital with which they carry on their operations, and under managers elected and removable by themselves.

This passage represents the genius of co-operation; and toward this kind of consummation, all of its successes and all of its aspirations directly point. Its plans as yet may not be perfect, and it may experience defeats before it finally secures victory; but every scheme proposed, every measure submitted, looks toward that form of society which Mill forecasts as inevitable. The growth of temperance, the increase of frugality, the advance of intelligence and morality, wherever co-operative principles are cherished, are in themselves assurances that it comes closer to the divine method for social regeneration than any other, and should receive from the Church of Christ her hearty approval and sympathetic support.

Another obligation rests upon her: she must undertake the reorganization of charity. Doubtless there will always be suffering in the world and need for hospitals, orphanages, asylums, homes for aged people, and refuges for the wayward. What the millennium may have in store for us we are not to presume on in the present, and though a better industrial economy will abate the demands for relief and reduce them to the minimum, we cannot reasonably hope to be free from them altogether. Therefore the whole subject of relief and philanthropy should be diligently studied, with the object in view of determining what reforms are necessary in the present system and what changes are indispensable to bring it into harmony with the more enlightened age on which we are entering. There is something strangely pathetic in the number of benefactions which have come into existence during the nineteenth century, most of them emanating from or

fostered by Christianity. Our hearts turn with admiration to the benevolent institutions founded by George Müller, of Bristol, by Doctor Barnardo, and by Charles H. Spurgeon, of London. But these gracious and precious charities are only signs, outlying stars, pointing to the heavens bestudded with similar centers of light and love. London, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Vienna, Paris, New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and other great communities, are distinguished for their abundant philanthropies in the form of hospitals, infirmaries, dispensaries, asylums, homes for the aged, lodging-houses for the poor, shelters for waifs and neglected children, societies for inebriates, for the protection of animals, for the redemption of fallen women, and for other worthy purposes too numerous to be specified. In London five hundred charitable organizations spend over £1,000,000 annually ($5,000,000), and in New York the amount expended yearly exceeds $4,000,000, and similar sums are devoted to benevolence in other communities, making, in all, a bewildering total.

It is almost impossible, however, to rely on figures, statisticians differ so widely in their estimates. "The Spectator" (London, March 3, 1900) quotes from the "Official Year Book of the Church of England," and gives as the total of her benefactions for one year spent in the interest of curates, clerical assistants, elementary education, philanthropy, and parochial purposes, the enormous sum of £5,398,000. It does seem as though this amount ought to relieve the necessities of the worthy poor in Great Britain. But it does not, and this does not represent the charitable contributions of the Nonconformists. This lavish generosity is not by

any means restricted to England. In Germany, for instance, there are almost endless provisions made for the succor and relief of the distressed. There are day nurseries, with one hundred and eighty-seven thousand eight hundred and seventeen children and two thousand two hundred and sixty-four matrons; there are institutions for the employment of children, with some twenty-three thousand beneficiaries; there are refuges for children injured by neglect, with twelve thousand nine hundred and twenty-five dependents; there are three hundred orphan homes, with thirteen thousand inmates; there are temporary quarters for tramps and for moneyless artisans, helping in one year three million six hundred and eighty-eight thousand five hundred and forty-eight persons; there are female servants' lodging-houses, supplying annually beds for upward of thirteen thousand three hundred and thirty-eight girls passing from one city to another in search of employment; there are sailors' missions, waiters' missions, railroad missions, city missions, Magdalen asylums, and hospitals for almost every distinct type of disease.

These benefactions call for extraordinary outlays in money and must prove a serious drain on the resources of the people. In France, Yves Le Querdec reminds us that "devoted men and women have established a thousand different charities, varying them according to the needs with an ingenuity and a generosity equally marvelous, and multiplying institutions, *crèches*, almshouses, workshops, clubs, orphanages, schools, hospitals, and benevolent societies." Most of these helpful enterprises in France have been inaugurated by the benevolent among the Catholic population, just as in Germany

many of them have been fostered by the Protestants, and, doubtless, all of them, either in the Old World or the New, whether originating with the church or not, are indebted to the spirit of Christianity for their existence.

All this is pathetic—beautifully and even tragically so; for these multiplied charities, while creditable to the Christian spirit, are comments on the sad failure of our political economy. They demonstrate that our industrial system is not what it ought to be, for, if it were, much that is now lavished on charity would be spent on wages and the recipients would become more self-reliant on account of the change. Likewise they are signs of a troubled conscience, of an uneasy feeling that the evils of our age are largely the outgrowth of bungling methods and of a desire, if possible, to make atonement for the wrongs inflicted and for the remedy of which, neither within the church nor without, has an adequate antidote yet been provided. What adds to the pathos of it all is that there is an ever-deepening consciousness that these eleemosynary measures do not seem to be effective in narrowing the domain of poverty, or in materially diminishing the number of beneficiaries, or in removing the causes which have called them into operation. What we may term, without offense, the relative failure of charity, has disturbed many thoughtful and humane observers, and, in France, it has aroused unusual interest and discussion.

It may enable us to understand more clearly what is meant by this failure if we attend to some recent utterances on the subject published in France. These testimonies have a peculiar value, as they emanate from a

country where its faith has had much to do in shaping its public life, and where science has been invoked to regulate public administrations. One writer plunges into the subject in the following manner:

> Our Catholic works are indeed carried on with wonderful enthusiasm, energy, and devotion. The amount of sacrifice, of strength and money, is truly prodigious. How is it, then, that so much good work does not change the condition of society? That, in spite of so much work, the march of evil is not arrested? I go farther: Is it not in certain respects quickened? We have worked much and yet we have deteriorated, and that for nearly a century.[1]

Another writer asserts that these excessive benefactions have only produced "hot-house" Christians, while the age demands "open-air" Christians. The same author adds: "We try to save a few individuals without attempting to save society. If only those who were saved had been able, after that, to fulfill their social duties; but finding themselves in a disorganized state of society, they have seen neither opportunity for acting nor any employment for their faculties."[2] "There is in our method of work," says Le Querdec, "something highly injurious to family life, and for that reason this method is in some respects anti-social. Who does not see that, in putting ourselves in the place of the persons responsible, in assuming their duties, we have encouraged them to cast off more and more their responsibility, and thus we have aggravated the evil?" Hence he concludes: "In my opinion it would be better to help ten mothers to fulfill their home duties than to take

[1] "*A Reculons*," by Student of Catholic Faculties, Lille.

[2] "*Reforme Sociale*."

care of the children of twenty at the *crèche*." And an intelligent writer in "*L'Univers*" throws considerable light on the reasons for complaint and discouragement in these words:

French Catholics do not consider enough the fact that all these charities show a false kind of activity, which is very remarkable as well as a lamentable constitutional weakness. These institutions have for their object to supply the lack or inefficiency of the essential institutions of society—family, parish, workshop, commune, State. They offer to control the children whom the parents do not control, to reach the Christians whom the parish does not reach, to help the workman whom the workshop and the master do not help, to govern the citizens whom good laws, a good government, and a good local administration do not keep in order. From the moment when these lacks exist it is certainly well to remedy them, but in using remedies let us realize that they are only temporary and ephemeral, and let us recognize that the only substantial and permanent philanthropic effort is that which replaces society on its proper and natural basis by the efficient exercise of their duties to the State, of parents, masters, clergy, and magistrates.

In view of these representations, what more reasonable than the conclusion of Yves Le Querdec:

Results certainly are not wanting, but they are, according to what those say who know, very far from being what they ought to be. The returns are not in proportion to the strength expended. If this fact is true, and it appears scarcely to be doubted, it means that our charitable work is badly organized. When a machine consumes too much fuel for the work it does, it means that there is a defect in its construction,

The experiences of the French reflect with more or less faithfulness the experiences of other benevolent people, and a consensus of opinion would reach the

same conviction—that "the machine consumes too much fuel for the work it does." But is "the defective construction" to be remedied, or must it be left just as it is? Mr. Carnegie, the philanthropic millionaire, when asked why he gave so much money to libraries, is reported to have answered: "I undertake to help the swimmers, not the submerged tenth." And there is sound philosophy in the reply, although the church must not ignore the submerged. Her chief duty, admitting that she should pluck the drowning from the depths, is to assist them and others to swim, and not undertake the impossible—*swim for them.* I am satisfied, however, that no schemes of beneficence will fully counteract the evils of the present industrial system, and the church should not blind herself to this fact and proceed on the supposition that the generous transfusion of her own blood can compensate for the loss sustained by the constant drainage of the life-current of millions through the mischievous methods of modern business.

But, assuming that she labors honestly for reform in this direction, she should likewise give more attention to the subject of charity. The great denominations should come together and agree on some principle of co-operation in their benevolent work, so that none of the worthy shall be neglected and none of the needy be pauperized by unwise lavishness. They ought to render this service more sacred by associating it directly with the ministrations of the churches, and not, as it frequently is now, leave it to be regarded as an obligation which the commonwealth owes the citizen. When such an impression as this gets abroad, as in im-

perial Rome, the number of indigents who are shameless increase and the more imperious their demands become. It is necessary for the best interests of society that Christianity keep in her own hands the offices of charity. When she does this, when she is careful to instruct the poor, when she does not bestow alms to increase her power over the superstitious, and when she is more anxious that the recipients of her bounty appreciate the sympathizing hand that confers the gift than the gift itself, then her benefactions will truly bless. Unhappily, during this century, she has given of her means, not always intelligently, and has been disposed, in many cases, to place the responsibility of administration on outside agencies; and while she has contributed liberally, thousands of people have not credited her with much interest in the work. The time has come for her to do her own work, to do it directly, studiously, and tenderly, seeking always, not merely to relieve temporary suffering, but to make those whom she succors self-reliant, industrious, and frugal.

A final service she is specially called on to render of social betterment, for which she is pre-eminently endowed, and without which no movement for human amelioration can succeed. She can and she ought to foster the spirit of universal brotherhood everywhere. Nor should she permit some seeming theological exigency to interfere with this gracious work. That the necessity for more fraternity is deep and crying a pathetic passage in the "Autobiography"[1] of Mrs. Annie Besant witnesses. Writing of her own experiences, she says:

[1] Pp. 338, 339.

The socialist position sufficed on the economic side, but where to gain the inspiration, the motive, which should lead to the brotherhood of man? Our efforts to organize bands of unselfish workers had failed. Much, indeed, had been done, but there was not a real movement of self-sacrificing devotion, in which men worked for love's sake only and asked but to give, not to take. Where was the material for the nobler social order? where the hewn stones for the building of the temple of man? A great despair would oppress me as I sought for such a movement and found it not.

It is the exalted business of the church to furnish just such material, and the social edifice, with even co-operation for its corner-stone, can never be built unless such hewn stones are at hand. Her place is in the quarry; not there continually and exclusively, but still there. Unless the rough edges and hard angularities of selfishness be removed and men and women be softened and shaped by love, there will be little chance of radical changes. Let not the church undervalue this side of her high vocation to the world. To beget love, to deepen love, to reveal the wonderful gospel at the heart of love, and to awaken the slumbering holy passion of love on behalf of the degraded and the lost cannot be the least of her sacred privileges. If the possession of love is a greater glory than the possession of faith and hope, then the creation of love in human hearts must be a greater glory still.[1] Wherever else the church may fail, she cannot afford to fail here. The final redemption of society rests on her faithfulness to this work. "Love covers a multitude of sins." Though she may fail as an economist, and though her sociology may be counted unscientific, if she loves much and

[1] 1 Cor. 13.

brings many to love likewise the world will forgive much. The life of love in her which was supremely in Christ Jesus she must hasten to impart to the multitudes around her, and this she can do through her unique spiritual ministrations and by the identification of herself with every cause that tends to bless mankind. To all who have a message of hope, to all who are ready to bear burdens, to all who champion the cause of suffering, to all who assail entrenched and ancient wrongs, and to all who march in the vanguard of progress, she should show herself friendly. They should have no doubt of her sympathy and prayers, and they should feel, whatever might befall them, they could never lose her loyal co-operation. Her song should ever be :

Press bravely onward ! Not in vain
Your generous trust in human kind ;
The good which bloodshed could not gain
Your peaceful zeal shall find.

Press on ! The triumph shall be won
Of common rights and equal laws,
The glorious dream of Harrington,
And Sidney's good old cause,

Blessing the cotter and the crown,
Sweetening worn Labor's bitter cup ;
And, plucking not the highest down,
Lifting the lowest up.

Press on ! And we who may not share
The toil or glory of your fight,
May ask at least, in earnest prayer,
God's blessing on the right !

If thus she sings, and if she mingles her banners with those of the struggling army anxious to conquer the

savagery of our civilization, she will be loved. No longer will she be viewed with suspicion and hate, no longer will she be scorned by the toiling millions—she will be loved. And, coming to love her, the people, through her love for them, will come to love one another, and then that which Mrs. Besant sought will be found, the principle, and the only principle, through which "the nobler social order" can be constructed and through which it may hope to be perpetuated as long as time endures.

VI

THE BIBLE AND CRITICISM

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme,
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed;
How He who bore in heaven the second name,
Had not, on earth, whereon to lay his head;
How his first followers and servants sped;
The precepts sage they wrote to many a land;
How he who, lone in Patmos banished,
Saw, in the sun, a mighty angel stand;
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounced by heaven's command.

—*Robert Burns.*

VI

THE BEARING OF RECENT RESEARCH ON THE INSPIRATION OF HOLY WRIT

SOMEWHAT strange to modern thought the fervid declaration of a poet whose works are now almost forgotten:

> Sad error this, to take
> The light of nature rather than the light
> Of revelation for a guide. As well
> Prefer the borrowed light of earth's pale moon
> To the effulgence of the noonday's sun.

For a time during the nineteenth century it seemed as though naturalism was destined to supersede other religions; and the impression still widely, though more vaguely, prevails that the material universe is luminous with heavenly truth and is all-sufficient to make known the character of God and the import of man. To write, therefore, in disparaging terms of "the light of nature" is not even now quite comprehensible to a goodly number of intelligent people, and yet a notable reaction has set in favorable to the sentiments expressed by the bard. More than a suspicion has been aroused that from the physical, however sublime or beautiful, there can be derived no satisfactory answer to the deep questions that perplex the soul. If, indeed, it be a "word of God," as one sweet singer intimates, it is a cabalistic word, dark and confusing, a gigantic hieroglyphic, unreadable without a Rosetta stone, and, if such a Rosetta

stone be enwrapped in the consciousness of man, there is need of a Higher Teacher to make legible its characters.

We are at last beginning to learn that the mind only receives from nature what it originally imparts to nature, as the musician only draws from his instrument the melody his touch conveys. Eloquent and impressive, and illustrative also of our meaning, these sentences from Vaughan's "Mystics":

> Go into the woods and valleys when your heart is rather harassed than bruised and when you suffer from vexation more than grief. Then the trees all hold out their arms to relieve you of the burden of your heavy thoughts, and the streams under the trees glance at you as they go by and will carry away your trouble along with the fallen leaves, and the sweet-breathing air will draw it off together with the silver multitude of the dew. But let it be with anguish or remorse in your heart that you go forth into nature and, instead of your speaking her language, you make her speak yours. Your distress is then infused through all things and clothes all things, and nature only echoes and seems to authenticate your hopelessness. Then you find the device of your sorrow on the argent shield of the moon and see all the trees of the field weeping and wringing their hands with you, while the hills seated at your side in sackcloth look down upon you prostrate and reprove you like Job's comforters.

It is likewise true, if a distressed mind carries its darkness to Nature for light, as the despairing conscience does its bitterness, she only seems to authenticate its helpless ignorance. It is not denied that, rightly interpreted, the universe does illustrate and ratify the profoundest spiritual truths, and that Swedenborg is not far wrong in regarding the physical as symbolical of the spiritual; but there is no evidence that it originates

these truths or explains its own symbolism. Though an affirmative answer may be given to Milton's questioning,

> What if earth
> Be but the shadow of heaven and things therein
> Each to other more like than on earth is thought?

and though we are assured that "the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made," it still remains that the seeing depends upon the eyes, and the eyes upon a light, born not of sun or stars but emanating directly from God himself.

Hence it was that Fichte, under the influence of such a philosophy as this, wrote:

> Among all nations, so far as they have raised themselves from the perfectly savage state to that of a community, there are to be found . . . traditions of supernatural inspirations and influences of the deity upon mortals; in a word, although presented here more widely, there under an aspect more refined, still, universally, the notion of revelation is met by the observer.

Therefore he argues that "the phenomenon is so important that philosophy ought to investigate its origin, and not, without hearing, class it among the inventions of deceivers or banish it to the land of dreams."[1] And Doctor Fairbairn, representing more recent scholarship, says:

> Speech is natural to spirit, and, if God is by nature spirit, it will be to him a matter of nature to reveal himself. . . If, then, God ever speaks to the conscience of any man, he speaks at the same moment to all men, and his words do not, by being written,

[1] See William Lee's "Inspiration of Scriptures."

lose their aboriginal quality. . . The idea of a written revelation may be said to be logically involved in the notion of a living God.[1]

This confident conclusion is, however, challenged by a very respectable school of advanced thinkers. While conceding that God reveals himself, they repudiate as incredible that he should have made known particular religious doctrines, and have provided for their permanent preservation by directing his servants, duly qualified by himself, to reduce the same to writing, with the record of such events connected with their origin as might tend to illustrate their meaning. According to their conception of God's dealings with mankind, it is rational to expect that he will communicate with his creatures, but not with sufficient explicitness and directness for his messages to be definitely formulated, and certainly not accompanied with an injunction to shape them into a volume. They object not so much to the possibility of a revelation as they do to a fixed, final, and authorized report of a revelation. That God may speak they allow, but that he may write or control the powers of men to pen what he would have remembered, they cannot for a moment tolerate. In their opinion it is reasonable that he should reflect himself in human souls as an image is reflected in a mirror, but not reasonable that he should photograph the image in such a manner that it would remain to instruct successive generations.

There are some positions that need only to be stated for their untenableness to be felt, and the one to which I have referred is a case in point. If it accords with

[1] "Christ in Modern Theology," p. 496.

the fitness of things for the Infinite Being to manifest himself, it cannot be otherwise than fitting that he should adopt such means as would secure to the world the benefits of such manifestation. Even though in coming ages he may amplify his original communications, and even though he may, as time rolls on, assist the human mind in evolving from them ever-deepening meanings, there are good reasons why these original communications should be fixed and preserved—if for no other purpose that, at least, they might serve as the universal grammar of theology. The agitations and speculations of the last hundred years have not succeeded in refuting or in seriously discrediting this reasoning, and to the overwhelming mass of Christians it is sound and unanswerable. They not only subscribe to it, but they maintain that their own sacred books present the loftiest and the most demonstrable, if not the exclusive, instance of its soundness.

Nor can it be denied that the books themselves create a presumption favorable to their divine origin and heavenly mission. The skeptical Heine regarded them as a breath laden with the sweets of paradise, and, after prolonged examination of the Bible, exclaimed:

> What a book! Vast and wide as the world, rooted in the abysses of creation, and towering up beyond the blue secrets of heaven. Sunrise and sunset, promise and fulfillment, life and death, the whole drama of humanity, are all in this book. . . Its light is like the body of the heavens in its clearness, its vastness is like the bosom of the sea, its variety like the scenes of nature.

This singularly beautiful testimony reminds me of what John Ruskin has written regarding the emotions excited by the Alps on those whose minds are open and

susceptible to impressions. He says that their "wall of granite in the heavens" has been the same to succeeding generations of sight-seers, and then, alluding to the dead, he adds:

> They have ceased to look upon it; you will soon cease to look also, and the granite wall will be for others. Then, mingled with these more solemn imaginations, come to the understanding of the gifts and glories of the Alp—the fancying forth of all the fountains that well from its rocky walls, the strong rivers that are born out of its ice, and all the pleasant valleys that wind between its cliffs, and all the châlets that gleam among its clouds, and happy farmsteads couched upon its pastures.

To many devout minds this is an image of the Christian revelation. To them the Holy Bible is as the Alps, clothed with purity as with snow and surrounded by tender mysteries as summer hills with fleecy clouds; while not a few see only the granite wall, the stern, firm, inexorable things that enter into the substance of the volume; they perceive the streams of healing influence that have gone forth from its solemn retreats and the fertility and beauty which have graced and freshened society wherever its cooling and vitalizing air has circulated among the habitations of men. That it has proven a practical blessing to mankind is so evident that the question of its value to the world is hardly within the range of practical discussion. Says Coleridge:

> For more than a thousand years the Bible, collectively taken, has gone hand in hand with civilization, science, law—in short, with the moral and intellectual cultivation of the species, always supporting and often leading the way. Its very presence as a believed book has rendered the nation emphatically a chosen race, and this too in exact proportion as it is more or less gen-

erally known and studied. Of those nations which in the highest degree enjoy its influences, it is not too much to affirm that the differences, public and private, physical, moral, and intellectual, are only less than what might be expected from a diversity of species. God and holy men and the best and wisest of mankind, the kingly spirits of history, enthroned in the hearts of mighty nations, have borne witness to its influences, have declared it to be beyond compare the most perfect instrument, the only adequate organ of humanity.

The impression has been sedulously created in some quarters that recent scholarly investigations have measurably dimmed these bright credentials and have damaged the once commanding authority of the Scriptures. Every intelligent reader, even of popular literature, knows very well the grounds on which these representations rest. This century has been marked by a prolonged conflict between the ardent friends of revelation and the revolutionary movements of modern investigation. At first, the appearance of geology was treated as a covert attack on the Pentateuch, and its views of creation were rejected with scorn as contradicting the Mosaic account. No one seemed to stop and inquire whether the difficulty and discrepancy might not lie between traditional interpretations and science and not at all between science and the Bible. But this alarm had scarcely subsided when a fresh outbreak was occasioned by Darwin's epoch-making volume on evolution. This seemed necessarily to antagonize the radical conceptions of sin and redemption, of incarnation and regeneration, which enter so largely into the warp and woof of Bible teaching.

Then, as though this were not sufficient to shake the faith of multitudes, there loomed up ominously the

seemingly destructive agency of textual or lower criticism and historical or higher criticism. These twin invaders of the repose precious and sacred to conservative orthodoxy were not absolute novelties in the nineteenth century. They had frequently been heard of before, and always with something akin to dismay. At the time of the Reformation they were represented by Lorenzo Valla on the southern side of the Alps and by Erasmus and Carlstadt on the northern. Two of these eminent men strove to determine the true text of the New Testament, while the third shocked many of his contemporaries by declaring, as the result of his inquiries, that the authorship of the Pentateuch was unknown. Ludovicus Cappellus, in 1650, revived and elaborated their decisions, and, though he was assailed for his temerity in exposing the defects of the accepted text, scholars like Grotius, Usher, Voss, and Bochart accepted his findings. In 1670 Spinoza discussed anew the question of the Pentateuch, and was constrained to pronounce against traditional views. In this he was sustained by Le Clerc, of Amsterdam, to whom is attributed the now familiar reply, made in answer to those who remind the critics that Christ always spoke of Moses as the author of the five books: "Our Lord and his apostles did not come into the world to teach criticism to the Jews, and hence spoke according to the common opinion." The year 1751 brought another advanced thinker into the arena of debate, Wetstein, of Basel, who laid down the principle that the New Testament should be studied as any other book, and he was ably seconded by Bengel, if it be correct to refer to this foremost scholar of the Lutheran communion as secondary to any one. Astruc

carried these interesting inquiries yet further, and, in 1753, published certain conjectures on the "fragments" which were joined together to make up Genesis; then Eichhorn took up several aspects of critical investigation in a way at once original and disquieting; and, nearer to our own time and coming down to the present hour, there have appeared in quick succession and in brilliant groups, scholars like De Wette, Ewald, Vatke, Reuss, Graf, Hupfeld, Delitzsch, Kuenen, Wellhausen, Robertson Smith, Sanday, Driver, Harper, Briggs, and others, who, while not agreeing entirely among themselves, maintain that the traditional conceptions concerning the text and the composition of the Bible are no longer tenable. Their conclusions have not commanded the assent of the church universal, and have frequently been met either by derision or by execration. When they were given prominence in the famous "Essays and Reviews," Bishop Wilberforce was moved to indignation against them; Doctor Pusey, the Tractarian leader, denounced them; and religious parties in England were excited to a fever point by their apparent destructive tendency. The pope was constrained in *ex-cathedra* fashion to protest (1864), and, in many a village church and in many a simple home, humble but fervent Protestants were found agreeing with his holiness against the intellectual dictum of professors and reformed preachers.

Something very like despair was experienced by multitudes of godly people, to whom all investigations into the character of Holy Writ were almost as blasphemous as inquiries into the nature and doings of the Almighty. When the hysterical horror was at its height, eminent men in defiant tones took up the gauntlet against the

entire critical school and replied in most extravagant fashion. Doctor Baylee, principal of St. Aidan's College, declared that, "in the Scripture, every scientific statement is infallibly accurate; all its histories and narrations of every kind are without any inaccuracy. Its words and phrases have a grammatical and philological accuracy such as is possessed by no human composition." Dean Burgon, in 1861, preached at Oxford a sermon in which occurs this statement:

> No, sirs, the Bible is the very utterance of the Eternal, as much God's own word as if high heaven were open and we heard God speaking to us with human voice. Every book is inspired alike and is inspired entirely. Inspiration is not a difference of degree, but of kind. The Bible is filled to overflowing with the Holy Spirit of God; the books of it, and the words of it, and the very letters of it.[1]

These preachers were only typical of a class who, unmoved by evidence and seemingly indifferent to the testimony of sound learning, spoke stridently, sarcastically, and scathingly against a school of thought whose investigations they had not followed, and whose premises many of them did not understand.

It is not to be denied that some of the critics, on their side, went too far, were too hasty at times in denying the supernatural, occasionally rested the most pretentious positions on the flimsiest of evidence, and brought their own science into disrepute by sometimes asserting more than they could prove, and by a frequent changing of their ground and retracing of their steps. But notwithstanding these weaknesses and deficiencies, it were absurd to claim that their labors have not been

[1] See White's "Warfare of Science with Theology," Vol. II., p. 369.

of the highest value to the cause of truth, or that, correctly understood, they have seriously militated against the supremacy of the Scriptures, or that they have justified the widespread and acute alarm which in several quarters has been excited.

Nor should the fact be overlooked that not a few thoughtful souls hail with delight what others regard with dread, and believe that judicious criticism, whether termed "higher" or "literary," must, in the long run, place the authority of the Scriptures on a surer foundation and restore them to such confidence and veneration as may have been lost. They feel that the Bible has measurably lost its hold on many because some of its friends have ascribed to it perfections which do not bear the test of examination. It was Bishop Hooker who laid down the rule that, "as incredible praises given to men do often abate and impair the credit of the deserved commendation, so we must also take great heed lest by attributing to Scriptures more than they can have, the incredibilty of that do cause even those things which they have to be less reverently esteemed." The same judgment is expressed by Richard Baxter, when he says: "It is the devil's last method to undo by over-doing, and so to destroy the authority of the Apostles by over-magnifying." If ever a point were well taken, this is in connection with the divine word. Max Müller refers to some who theorize about its origin in such a way as to leave the impression that the book was ready-made in heaven and handed down as we have it to the world. Equally extravagant is Turretin's assertion that the very vowel-points and accents of the Hebrew are inspired, or the declaration of Chemnitz

that the writers of the sacred volume were only "amanuenses of God, hands of Christ, scribes and notaries of the Holy Spirit, living pens." These immoderate representations are intended to exalt the Bible; but it is not clear that they succeed in their object. They go too far. In their zeal to crown the book with glory and honor, they ascribe to it perfections which are not reconcilable with some of its contents.

"There are things in the Old Testament," writes Henry Drummond in the "Expositor," [1] "cast in the teeth of the apologist by skeptics, to which he has simply no answer. These are the things, the miserable things, the masses have laid hold of. They are the stock-in-trade of the free-thought platform and the secularist pamphleteer. A new exegesis, a reconsideration of the historic setting, and a clearer view of the moral purposes of God, would change from barriers into bulwarks of faith."

The critics claim that these things cannot be explained away on the hypothesis of Chemnitz and his school; and that, so long as they remain and are not dealt with rationally, the Bible must suffer loss. They believe that they are able to dispose of these and other difficulties in a fair and straightforward manner, and in various ways to clear up the doctrine of inspiration from the misconceptions and imputations which have rendered it almost incredible to thinking men; and it is because there is need of such work and because there are reasons for assuming that they are striving to do it, that their investigations are being welcomed by an ever-widening circle of intelligent people.

How far they have succeeded, it is of interest to determine; for the results of their labors will exercise a

[1] February, 1885.

tremendous influence on the religious life of the future. Well, then, may we devote some degree of attention to the bearing of recent research on the inspiration of Holy Writ.

This research has, in my judgment, settled beyond reasonable doubt that the inspiration of the Bible resides in the essential nature of the book and not necessarily in the letter. That Christian people should have been so long in arriving at this conclusion, and that there are so many reluctant to accept it now, is one of the most surprising facts in the history of religion. Yet it is so, and doubtless it is to be accounted for by the singular fascination which ancient and long-accepted opinions have for the devout. From the time when the scribes became an influential caste in Israel down to our own day, with here and there remarkable and lucid intervals and with unmistakable signs of a clearer judgment to come, the conviction has prevailed that every word in the Bible was fully inspired. The later Jews counted every verse and letter in the sacred books, attached importance to every mark under and above the line, and believed that a mystery lurked in every jot and tittle. Aquila declared that a meaning was to be found in every monosyllable, even in every superfluous "and" or "also" or sign of case, and in the flourish of every letter. The extreme form of this doctrine may be studied in Philo, where some of its absurdities may be perceived as well. To him, the writers of the Bible are only as instruments of music moved invisibly by God's power, and as passive as such instruments. Notwithstanding his extreme views, his belief in verbal dictation, and, as Farrar puts it, in a kind of

divine ventriloquism, he takes grave liberties with the text. Several books he passes without mention; the historical portions he considers as mystical and not as narratives, narratives being, in his judgment, unworthy of the Spirit; and worse still, he blends with the word scraps of heathen philosophy and poetry, dealing with it as he pleases and degrading what he pretends to exalt. The theory of Josephus coincides exactly with that of Philo. They both insist on an inspiration that practically obliterates the faculties of the mediums employed, and then, to escape the difficulties of their position, apply a system of allegorizing and spiritualizing, which not only supersedes the literal sense but actually renders it superfluous. For why should any revelation be given at all, if a meaning is to be arbitrarily given it by the expositor, and if every expositor is free to draw from his own consciousness or from his imagination what it ought to teach? And if such a course is demanded by the exigencies of Philo's doctrine, then, whether held by Jew or Gentile, it is self-judged and condemned as false.

The primitive Christians accepted from the Hebrews the traditional idea of inspiration. While at first no specific theory was advocated, yet patristic learning reveals the influence of Jewish thought on the Fathers. Thus, Clemens Romanus calls the holy Scriptures "the true words of the Holy Ghost"; and Gregory the Great says: "It is needless to ask who wrote the book of Job, since we may faithfully believe that the Holy Ghost was its author." Dissatisfaction with such excessive liberalism revealed itself during the twelfth century in the teachings of Abelard. That remarkable

man assailed the authority of tradition, and went so far as to challenge the infallibility of the sacred writers. His protest, however, speedily died away, lost in the clamor of those who were not sufficiently familiar with the Scriptures to really appreciate his discriminating distinctions. With the sixteenth century and with the enlightened labors of Reuchlin and Erasmus, the beginning of serious dissent from the hard theory of the Jewish school commenced; but various vicissitudes were to be experienced before it should reach its present proportions. They and Martin Luther subjected the books of the Bible to a pretty thorough sifting. They did not regard them as a collection of supernatural sentences, verbally dictated. Luther, in particular, taught that the Holy Ghost illumined the mind of prophets and apostles so that they had a perfect knowledge of salvation, and that the recording of divine communications was a natural and not a miraculous act.

But even these leaders were not equal to the task of bringing the church over to their way of thinking. The second period of the Reformation witnessed a reaction. Romanism laid stress on its own infallibility, and the Reformers imagined that it would help their cause to oppose an infallible book to an infallible church; but, as in the case of the church, this high attribute, when applied to the Bible, has not unified opinion and interpretation, and, however firmly held, has not produced the restful confidence contemplated. Intent on a very laudable purpose, never to be accomplished by their methods, the Reformers of the second generation began to substitute dogmatism for reason and common sense, and their successors for many years followed

blindly their leadership. It was given out that the Bible was not the record of revelation but the revelation itself; and that, as such, it was a verbally dictated volume, whose human authors were deprived of their individuality during its preparation. Criticism of the text was treated as blasphemy. It was said that Hellenistic Greek was simply holy Greek, and that the Spirit for our pleasure had adopted the style of the different human pens he employed. These views prevailed to some extent among the Puritans of England, from whom we in America have derived what is generally regarded by members of our churches as the only orthodox doctrine of inspiration.

Yet, though thousands may be willfully determined to ignore the fact, there has been for many years a steady movement away from the rigid iron-bound theory of the post-Reformers. This second reaction, which seems to be becoming permanent, could hardly be avoided. From the hour when Robert Stevens reported two thousand three hundred and eighty-four variations in the oldest manuscripts, even though it was acknowledged that no article of faith was thereby obscured, the doom of verbal inspiration was inevitable. Criticism, the improved knowledge of the text, the growth of science, and even the assaults of rationalism, have rendered this result only the more certain. Heroic struggles have been made to arrest this tendency, but in vain ; and still noble defenders of the faith, who feel that the stability of Christianity is dependent on the maintenance of what the Protestant scholastics set forth, plead earnestly for the inherited faith and count those who question it as heretics. Their endeavors are futile.

Assertion, special pleading, and revilings are impotent to stay the tide of dissent from a hypothesis which has been tried and found to be wanting; but from the antiquity of the tree, and from the depths to which its roots have penetrated, and from their close interblending with the religious thought of twenty centuries, we can readily understand the difficulty experienced by modern research in supplanting it with one of diviner growth. Nevertheless, however hard, it is being done.

What the new growth is which is being substituted for the old can easily be ascertained by following the literature of the subject; and if I quote from the writings of those who were not and are not technically higher critics, but who were governed by the critical spirit, it is because I would have it clearly seen that the conclusions reached are not due to the excessive rationalism which is associated in many minds with higher criticism. I begin with Bengel, already referred to, whose candor, thoughtful liberality, and sweet reasonableness are evinced in what he says about troubled inquiries:

> It is easy for all who are content to live on like the rest of the world to be orthodox. They believe what was believed before them, and never trouble themselves with testing it. But when a soul is anxious about truth, then things are not quite so easy. How wrong it is then to rush in upon just such sensitive souls, to cross-question, to gag, and stun them, when we ought, on the contrary, to give them liberty of speech that they may gain confidence and suffer themselves to be led aright.

This liberty he himself exercised in judging the true character of the sacred Scriptures. They were to him "an incomparable narrative of the divine government of

the human race throughout all ages of the world, from the beginning to the end of all things." The idea of their mechanical verbal inspiration he quietly rejected, and fully recognized the manifold differences in style and idiosyncrasies of the composers. His opinions were not altogether unlike those of Luther, and he agreed with the Reformer in the expressed conviction quoted by Köstlin: "The Holy Ghost is the all-simplest writer that is in heaven or earth; therefore his words can have no more than one simplest sense, which we call the scriptural or literal meaning."

Herder, who died in 1803, and who expired penning a hymn to the Deity, followed closely on the line marked out by Bengel, and said "that the Bible contained a progressive revelation," and is the treasure-house of "vivid poetry, practical history, and an eternal philosophy." He further wrote in his "Letters":

> The Bible must be read in a human manner, for it is a book written by men for men. The best reading of this divine book is human. The more humanly we read the word of God, the nearer we come to the design of its author, who created man in his image, and acts humanly in all the deeds and mercies wherein he manifests himself as our God.

In a more explicit and formal way, Bishop Horne, during the last century, supported this conception and defined inspiration as "the imparting of such a degree of divine assistance, influence, or guidance as should enable the authors to communicate religious knowledge to others without error." He further says:

> When it is said the Scriptures were divinely inspired, we are not to understand that God suggested every word, or dictated

every expression. . . Nor is it to be supposed that they (the authors) were inspired in every fact which they related, or in every precept which they delivered. They were left to the common use of their faculties, and did not stand in need on every occasion of supernatural communication, which was afforded only when necessary. Nor does it follow that they derived from revelation the knowledge of those things which might be collected from the common sources of human intelligence. Some of their books were compiled from sacred annals, written by prophets and seers, from public records and documents of uninspired men. Whatever may be true respecting the historical portions, we may be fully convinced that the prophetical parts come from God.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge went beyond the bishop in the boldness of his utterances on this theme. He was not a professed theologian, and was not so conservative in the expression of his views as ordained ecclesiastics usually are and ought to be. In his "Aids to Reflection," and in his "Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit," —published after his death,—and in some others of his compositions, his sentiments are expressed with a freedom, brilliancy, and power which have rendered them potent in shaping modern thought. The Bible he terms a library of infinite value, that must have in it a divine spirit, as it appeals to all the hidden springs of feeling. "Whatever *finds* me," he writes, "bears witness that it has proceeded from a Holy Spirit." "In the Bible, there is more that finds me than I have experienced in all other books put together; the words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being; and whatever finds me brings with it an irresistible evidence of its having proceeded from the Holy Spirit." Then he declares himself against "the doctrine which requires me to believe that not only what finds me, but

all that exists in the sacred volume, and which I am bound to find therein, was not only inspired by, that is, composed by man under the actuating influence of, the Holy Spirit, but likewise dictated by an infallible intelligence; that the writers, each and all, were divinely informed, as well as inspired." Such a doctrine he rejects, as it must imply infallibility in physical science and in everything else as much as in faith, in things natural no less than in spiritual. He believes that the word of the Lord came to Samuel and Isaiah and the rest, and that these words have been faithfully recorded; but he recognizes no special need for supernatural aid in the recording, except where God directly promises assistance.

Referring to the power the various biographies contained in the Bible have over feeling, life, and conduct, he breaks forth into impassioned eloquence:

> But let me once be persuaded that all these heart-awakening utterances of human hearts, of men of like passions with myself,—their sorrowing, rejoicing, suffering, triumphing,—are but a *divina commedia* of a supernatural ventriloquist; that the royal harper, to whom I have so often submitted myself as a many-stringed instrument for his fire-tipped fingers to traverse, while every several nerve of emotion, passion, thought, that thrills the flesh and blood of our common humanity responded to the touch; that this sweet psalmist of Israel was himself a mere instrument,—a harp, an automaton,—poet, mourner, suppliant, all gone,—all sympathy, all example,—I listen in awe and fear, but in perplexity and confusion of spirit.

Similar sentiments have found expression in the works of Frederick Denison Maurice, Charles Kingsley, Dean Alford, Robertson Smith, Professor Sanday, Frederick Robertson, and Doctor Arnold, not to men-

tion a host of other scholarly names. Frederick Robertson writes:

> The inspiration of the Bible is a large subject. I hold it inspired, not dictated. It is the word of God; the words of men; as the former perfect, as the latter imperfect. God the Spirit as a sanctifier does not produce absolute perfection of human character; God the Spirit as an inspirer does not produce absolute perfection of human knowledge. I believe bibliolatry to be as superstitious, as false, and almost as dangerous as Romanism.

In harmony with this statement, Schaff testifies: "No inspiration theory can stand for a moment which does not leave room for the personal agency and individual peculiarities of the sacred authors and the exercise of their natural faculties in writing." And Arnold, in more vigorous and decided language, expresses the end of the whole matter:

> It is an unwarrantable interpretation of the word to mean by an inspired work, a work to which God has communicated his own perfections, so that the slightest error or defect is inconceivable. . . Surely many of our words and many of our actions are spoken and done by the inspiration of God's Spirit, without whom we can do nothing acceptable to God. Yet does the Holy Spirit so inspire us as to communicate to us his perfections? Are our best words or works utterly free from error or from sin? All inspiration does not then destroy the human and fallible part in the nature it inspires, it does not change man into God.

Recent research, if its labors have any value at all, imperatively demands that the substance of these various definitions be accepted. Their scope affords ample room for new cosmogonal conceptions, for the naturalization of geological chronologies and evolutionary processes, and for the elucidation of the moral difficul-

ties of the Old Testament and the reconciliation of discrepancies of the New. These modern researches shut us up to this general view of inspiration or render irresistible the abandonment of inspiration altogether. No doubt for the time being some of the radical critics are inclining toward the latter alternative; but the most spiritual among them, like Professor Sanday and Professor George Adam Smith, have welcomed the former, and, while I am not aiming in these lectures to set forth my own opinions, it does seem to me that there is nothing in this conclusion subversive of Bible teachings on the subject.

The word "inspiration" occurs only twice in the Bible: once in the book of Job, "There is a spirit in man and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding," and in St. Paul's Epistle to Timothy, "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction," etc.[1] The same term, however, is employed in two additional passages, but not translated by the same word. The one occurs where God is said to breathe on Adam and he becomes a living soul, and the other where Christ breathes on the apostles and they receive the Holy Ghost. From these instances we learn that the expression simply denotes a divine inbreathing, but conveys no assurance of perfectibility, either in human conduct or in human thought. Adam's inspiration did not preserve him from transgression and the fall, nor does the word itself carry with it the assurance that the energy it describes would necessarily and in every respect shield the recipient from error and misapprehension. What the word in

[1] Job 32 : 8; 2 Timothy 3 : 16, 17.

connection with the Bible manifestly teaches is that God was its primal source; that its soul is an emanation from his own Spirit; and that, as in the case of Adam, the body may have been made out of the dust of the ground, but only through a divine inbreathing could it become "a living soul." Our Lord himself has told us, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life"; and St. Paul has a similar thought in his mind when he writes, "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."[1] I lay stress on the word "life," because it denotes a mysterious force, all pervasive, whose operations can no more be reduced to strict formula than can the blowing of the wind. What we know of inspiration from the Scriptures is simply *that it is*, not what are its modes and methods. We infer that it must illuminate, that it must invigorate the mind, at times disclose visions, and at other times whisper messages from God.

Experts have informed us that they have been unable to decide the exact height of the Venus de Medici. They say that the "statue which enchants the world" defies precise measurement, because it is in a slightly stooping attitude. A similar difficulty lies in the way of a fixed and accurate definition of inspiration. There is in the Bible so manifest a condescension to human weaknesses, lowliness, and intellectual limitations, so wonderful a bending of the highest intelligence to the level of the humblest, that our rules and yardsticks are all at fault. We cannot mete out bounds and proportions. The charm of the Bible we catch, we feel "the

[1] John 6 : 63; 2 Cor. 3 : 6.

enchantment," but we can no more exhaustively explain and nicely determine its quality than we can define the nature of genius, with which it has affinity, but from which it is as wide apart as starlight from sunrise.

That some of these messages may have been verbally given, have been verbally remembered, and even verbally recorded, is not inconsistent with the general view here unfolded. It is against the hard, mechanical notion, which comprehends everything good, bad, and indifferent in one class and regards the entire record, without distinction, as having been dictated by the Almighty. Modern scholarship lifts up its voice in condemnation, but in maintaining its antagonism it is under no necessity to reject everything, like the Ten Commandments, as being the very articulated thought of the Almighty. It is not bound to commit itself on either side of this question. "Holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and the Holy Ghost may, as occasion required, have imparted the terminology as well as the impulse. But this admission must not be carried too far. It must not be permitted to obscure God's infinite variety in influencing his creatures or lead to the untenable inference that every expression used was originally derived from inspiration, for we must never forget the growing conviction of Christian scholars as stated by Professor W. Robertson Smith :

> He spoke not only through them (his prophets), but to them and in them. They had an intelligent share in the divine converse with them, and we can no more understand the divine word without taking them into account than we can understand a human conversation without taking account of both interlocutors.

To try to suppress the human side of the Bible in the interests of the purity of the divine word is as great a folly as to think that a father's talk with his child can be best reported by leaving out everything which the child said, thought, and felt.

If we take this human element into account it would be equal folly to suppose that the child would always reproduce his father's language, however he might venerate it, precisely and without the least verbal modification. There is no real necessity for such minute and painfully exact correspondence. We may have the mind of the Spirit without it, and that we have is proven by the wonderful power the Bible has over multitudes who are not in bondage to the letter and who have no very distinct recollection of its words.

The investigations which have so completely revolutionized modern religious thought on this subject logically necessitate the inference that the trustworthiness of the Scriptures and not merely their inspiration constitutes the true basis of their appeal to reason. Heretofore it has been argued that we should receive the teachings of the Bible because they are inspired, but now it is claimed that we should acknowledge the inspiration because of the teachings. It is truth that proves the inspiration, not inspiration the truth.

But at once the query is raised, What need, then, of inspiration at all? It certainly is not needed as evidence, for itself is the very thing in question. Perplexity will disappear when it is remembered that inspiration is equivalent to a declaration of supernatural origin, that it asserts the action of God on his creatures, and that for it not to be maintained would be an abandonment of the belief in a divinely given faith. In other

words, it is practically the same thing as saying that "the Bible is a revelation from God." If such an affirmation were not made the book would have no unique and sacred authority over us. But how are we to know that it has this authority? Not, surely, because it is asserted, but because of the trustworthiness of what it announces and enjoins. Inspiration is indispensable to the product, but the product itself must be judged by its veraciousness and its general trustworthiness. Consequently we find in the Bible itself sundry exhortations and divers explicit warnings which are somewhat irrelevant if we are not to test the credentials of an alleged inspired man or book by the character of the teachings published. We read: "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken; the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him."[1] Here, then, we have one claiming to be sent of God, to be inspired, and yet he may be set aside if his testimony is false. Again: "The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him."[2] And if his word shall not accord with some other kind of fact, with a fact that *is* instead of one to be, we are under no obligation to accept his message. The greater the divergence between his declaration and the fact, the less credible becomes his assumption of heavenly authority and inspiration. When St. John writes, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets

[1] Deut. 18 : 22. [2] Jer. 28 : 9.

are gone out into the world";[1] and when St. Paul adds, "Prove all things,"[2] we have sufficient warrant for subjecting every alleged revelation to close and thorough scrutiny.

It is interesting also to observe that St. John, when closing his Gospel, grounds its right to acceptance not on its inspiration, but on its truth;[3] and that St. Luke, when he takes in hand to set forth in order a declaration of these things, reminds Theophilus of his eminent qualifications for the task, and that among them inspiration is not enumerated.[4] Our Saviour likewise, in his controversies with the Jews, never assumes that whatever he says should be believed because he says it, but only and always because it is true. He challenges investigation and expects that he will be finally judged by the same rule that he employs in judging others.[5] This same principle is evolved from the findings and reasoning of higher criticism. While it concedes that there is an inspired revelation in the word of God, it imposes on us the necessity of search, of inquiry, that the divine may be discriminated from the human, the true from the erroneous, the essential from the adventitious, the permanent from the evanescent. In pursuing these investigations, it may lay down arbitrary canons of criticism, and may adopt *criteria* for its guidance destructive of the supernatural; but while these extremes—the fanaticism of rationalism—are to be deplored, they do not invalidate or discredit the obligation to "prove all things."

To many people, nothing seems more disastrous than

[1] 1 John 4 : 1. [2] 1 Thess. 5 : 21. [3] John 21 : 24.
[4] Luke 1 : 1–4. [5] John 4 and 8.

this encouragement to examine, weigh, accept, or reject, according to evidence. Yet how is it to be avoided? We are told that it must unsettle the foundations of faith, and lead to alienations and divisions in the Christian world. But it is a legitimate question to ask: Has any other theory saved the world from the spectacle of sects, of wrangling parties, and hostile camps? Our condition can hardly be worse than it has been; and, as verbal inspiration has not preserved the church from multiplied schisms, neither has it protected the Scriptures from reckless, irreverent, ridiculous, and contradictory interpretations. Where, then, is its practical advantage? A Christianity rent, and each particular part claiming that it rests on an infallible word, and probably set against all serious search into the merit of its position because of this very claim, is the sad comment on the value of a hypothesis which sets itself forth as a healer of divisions.

But, it is asked, if this hypothesis is abandoned, how are we to know what is from God, what from man, and what is binding on us, and what is not? How know? Set the imprecatory psalms over against the Sermon on the Mount, and it is scarcely conceivable that any intellect should fail to detect the distance between them nor doubt which is to be of authority in human conduct. Discrimination is not a difficult task, and, on either hypothesis, it is unavoidable. Though we may believe that every word in the Bible has been dictated, that does not commend to us the conduct of Samson, Ahab, Judas, and of other kindred souls. We set these men aside, just as we do some hasty and violent expressions which have fallen from the lips of Bible saints, as not

being for our imitation. Whether we like to do so or not, we must discriminate if we are to be really helped by the Scriptures. We constantly do it; and were it otherwise, we can readily see how the failure might open the way for serious departures from morality. Everything in the Bible inspired, and nothing to be questioned or distinguished from some other thing, then why may we not follow in the way of Cain, or in the evil way of David, and delude ourselves, because such things are recorded in the Scriptures, that by some mysterious process we are blameless? I wish I was quite sure that we have not in this kind of confusion and mystification an explanation of transgressions that are repeatedly committed by individuals who pride themselves on their belief in the inspiration of every word and sign of the sacred text; but I am not, and from what I have observed of the subtle influence of creeds, I must ever regard it as perilous to the interests of morals to speak in unguarded terms of everything in the Bible being equally inspired and equally of divine authority.

To these and similar suggestions, the objection has been ventured that, as human reason is fallible, we cannot have confidence in its decisions on the value of what is made known in holy writ. There is, however, a previous question that bears decisively on this objection: How can a fallible intellect decide on the infallibility of an infallible book? If its processes are unworthy of respect in the one instance, what entitles them to confidence in the other? How can it know a book to be infallible, except by examining the evidence on which it rests its claims? And if it is competent to do this, why should we suspect its ability to discriminate between

what is divine and what is human in the record itself? Twist and writhe as we may, it is impossible to escape the obligation that presses on us to analyze thoroughly the content of holy writ, to distinguish continually between the sheep and the goats, and to recognize the tares, even though we may not be able to pull them up from the sacred soil where they flourish, without in some way imperiling the wheat.

It was Schiller who indulged the vain desire:

> Oh, that an angel would descend from heaven,
> And scoop for me the right, the uncorrupted,
> With a pure hand from the pure fount of light.

But no such angel has been sent. God has conferred on us the honor of gathering from the fount of light the rays that are necessary to illumine our pathway to the grave. Why are we so anxious to escape this dignity? Why do we not see that, within the circle of this very crown, man's nobility is discernible? By this exalted obligation man is assigned an elevated rank among intelligences; and by its fulfillment, and in no other way, he develops the latent possibilities of his spiritual nature until he need not fear to stand in the same presence with cherubim and seraphim before the great white throne.

Concerning the changes which have taken place in our views of the Bible, and which necessitate the kind of treatment we have described, the Rev. William Brock has written with a suggestiveness and beauty that cannot be overpraised. He says:

> We have a conviction as firm as our fathers had of its unique character as a record of divine revelations; and we teach our chil-

dren to turn its pages with the olden reverence and love. But we cannot present it to them exactly as it was taught to us. It is no longer the mysterious aërolite, fallen in one glowing mass from heaven and incapable of analysis ; it is rather a succession of stratified deposits, each with its own history to be ascertained and its characteristic contents to be explored. It is a book, but it is still more a library or a literature, comparable in extent and variety "to a selection of English literature from Bede to Milton." It comprises poetry and philosophy, tradition and history, familiar letters and profound treatises, the regular narrative of the biographer and the raptured vision of the seer. It has its outer and inner courts, its sanctuary and holiest of all. It must be taught with a fine sense of proportion, a light touch on matters of mere transitory interest, and a stress upon essential truths. The old axiom, which assumed that every pin of the tabernacle was as precious as the altar or the ark, can no longer be admitted. . . There are indeed persons now living who can well remember how they trembled in their childhood, lest in their Scripture lessons they should misplace a letter or mispronounce a word, and so bring the curse of Rev. 22 : 19 upon their heads. It was time that such bondage should be broken.[1]

Yes, it is broken ; and the Bible, thus conceived and thus interpreted, has nothing to fear from modern research. Neither science nor higher criticism has invalidated or can invalidate its authority and trustworthiness when it is not hampered by indefensible views of its nature and composition. What, within the last few years, has been advanced by higher criticism against some of its representations has not succeeded in holding its own. Higher criticism is now questioning some of its own premises and several of its own generalizations. A reaction has set in ; and while it will not carry us back to the mechanical and unyielding views

[1] "Ancient Faith in Modern Light," p. 222.

of the fathers, it will sweep away a good deal of the critical guesswork which has been set forth confidently as fact and which challenged the integrity of the book itself, and will leave the Bible, on the close of this century, more firmly established in the confidence of mankind than, as writes the Rev. R. F. Horton, it was at the beginning:

> The higher criticism, or the scientific investigation of the authorship, composition, dates, and occasions of the Bible writings, can only be our friend. It cannot rob us of our inspired Scriptures; there they will be, when it has done its best, shining upon us like the quiet stars when the surf and the drift of the storm have passed away. All it can do, all it wishes to do, is to tell us the truth about our Scriptures. Its hypothetical theories, its extravagant conjectures, the excesses into which young speculative sciences always run, will be quietly moderated by the sure prevalence of truth. Its clearly established results, less or more, will be an unmixed gain to us all; they will not destroy our idea of inspiration; we shall in future include them in our idea of inspiration.[1]

But recent research, having helped us to a definition of inspiration and having suggested the necessary test of its genuineness, proceeds yet further and vindicates it from the assaults of those who deny it altogether, by sanctioning and sustaining "the gradualness of revelation." Evolution, as it is taught in science, finds something like its counterpart in the Scriptures; and the more its essential principle, as a method, is realized and admitted, the easier it is to explain the import of those ominous things which have tended to impair the authority of the Bible. Higher criticism, modern philosophy, scholarly exegesis, all combine to effect this de-

[1] "Inspiration and the Bible," p. 20.

sirable end. The bishop of Exeter reminds us that "the Christian religion does not profess (as does, for instance, the Mohammedan) to be wrapped up in one divine communication made to one man, and admitting thereafter of no modifications." Then he adds:

> Though resting on divine revelation, it is professedly a development, and is thus in harmony with the Creator's operations in nature. Whether we consider what is taught concerning the heavenly moral law, or concerning human nature and its moral and spiritual needs, or concerning Almighty God and his dealings with us his creatures, it is undeniable that the teaching of the Bible is quite different at the end from what it is at the beginning.

This thought, however, did not originate with his grace of Exeter. It is attributed, first of all, to Lessing, who taught that revelation is to be conceived of as a divine education of the race. At present, it finds widespread acceptance among thinkers and scholars. Mr. Gladstone, in his "Reply" to Colonel Ingersoll, acknowledges that "the moral history of man, in its principal stream, has been distinctly an evolution from the first until now." In one of his latest articles, the lamented Proctor, while not sympathizing with the English premier theologically, gently reproved Colonel Ingersoll for not placing himself in the position of the old believers in regard to God, and for failing to take account of the progress from the crude views of primitive ages to those that now prevail. Then, simply as a student and not as a Christian, he writes:

> Within the limits of the Old Testament, we recognize the evolution of man's moral nature. We have but to compare the

teachings of the first and greater Isaiah (chap. 1–39), with the teaching found in any book or any chapter from the opening of Genesis to the end of Chronicles, to recognize the development of a morality so much higher and so much purer, the recognition of a Deity so much worthier of love and reverence, that we might imagine we had lit upon a preacher of a different race, a race as far in advance of the Israelitish race of old as the Caucasian is in advance of the Papuans of to-day. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord; . . I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. . . Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, . . your appointed feasts my soul hateth. . . Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment [justice], relieve the oppressed, judge [seek justice for] the fatherless, plead for the widow."

What is thus discerned by Professor Proctor has been admirably stated by Newman Smyth in his "Old Faiths in a New Light," and, on the distinctively orthodox side, has been unreservedly admitted by Professor George P. Fisher of Yale. The latter refers to the "Gradualness of Revelation" as a fact, and adds: "Like the subsequent spread of the gospel, it was 'first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.' This inchoate, preparatory, and, in this sense, imperfect character is ascribed to the Old Testament system, both in the Old Testament itself and in the New. The whole form of the kingdom of God in the earlier dispensation of God was provisional; the disclosure of God was partial and increasing; laws fell short of the absolute standard of moral duty; rites were adapted to religious feelings and to perceptions not yet mature; the type of character corresponded to the inadequate conceptions of God; the ethical and emotional expressions

answered to the several stages of revelation to which they pertained. All this ought to be as familiar to readers of the Bible as the alphabet. Unhappily, it has been often overlooked by Christians and persistently ignored by adversaries of Christianity." Our Saviour himself taught that he came "not to destroy the law and the prophets," neither to discredit nor repudiate them, "but to fulfill." So "the law and the prophets were until John, but now the kingdom of God is preached"; that is, a higher stage has been reached in the history of revelation, and hence the old dispensation was only "the shadow of good things to come," while the body was of Christ. Its ideas are absorbed, expanded, transformed, completed, in the new economy; and to them are added fresh disclosures almost sufficient by themselves to form a whole system of doctrine. The new, indeed, rests on the foundations of the old; but the building takes to itself the glory of a temple not made by hands. Jesus never hesitates to contrast his precepts with those enacted in the former ages, and even sets aside Moses with his imperious, "It is written in the law, . . but *I* say unto you." He spoke "with authority, and not as the scribes," and with an authority so final and absolute that it superseded all words in conflict with his own. Referring to an important Mosaic regulation of divorce, he says that it was enacted on account of "the hardness" of men's hearts, that is, because of their semi-barbarous condition, and, in a measure, as a protection of the woman against arbitrary power and social ostracism; but though it was good as far as it went, it was not in accord with the higher estimate he revealed of the sacredness of marriage, and

consequently he swept it away and substituted a nobler principle.

We surely must see at a glance the need that existed for training, discipline, education, relatively keeping pace with the successive instalments of revealed truth, the one preparing the way for the other, and the other, in its turn, elevating intellectually and morally, and so fitting for the reception of yet additional light. This process is conspicuously prominent throughout the entire history of Israel. In the patriarchal reformation, in the Egyptian bondage, in the exodus, in the monarchy, in the exile and the return, progress is obvious in the direction of grander ideas of God and of truer and broader views of human hope and duty. It will also be observed, that every step in national development, every fresh movement leading to a higher plane of thought and life, is inaugurated by the impartation of a new truth or the resuscitation of an old one, for the effective action of which preceding struggles and experiences have prepared the way. Thus Abraham received a divine word and gracious disclosure impelling him in the direction of monotheistic reform. Moses takes the law from the hand of God, a gift demanded by the needs of the young nation. Truth comes to Samuel, qualifying him for leadership and facilitating the unification of the long-distracted and discordant population; and whatever was wrought by prophets or accomplished by wise rulers was due to the divine voice speaking in them, as in the case of Isaiah, or to a divine message recovered, as in the case of Ezra, who led Israel onward toward the Messianic age through the restoration of the books of the law. Thus, through the centuries,

the light advanced, and as the sun's approach at day is heralded by mountain peaks aflame with its glory, so the distinct epochs and leading events of Israel's career blazed with the radiance of the ever-increasing light, until it reached meridian splendor in the person and ministry of Christ—pledge and promise too of the millennial reign, when shadow and darkness shall be banished from the earth forever.

To this theory modern scholarship is pledged, and of its value as the solvent of Bible difficulties there can be no doubt. Only a few illustrations of its practical bearing on such difficulties need be given here, just enough to indicate how they have been dealt with by nineteenth century thinkers. It is not necessary to repeat the list of representations given in the Old Testament, which shock the moral sensibilities of our age—representations which have often been the despair of God's friends and the delight of his enemies. Almost every attack on the sacred volume during the earlier period of this century derived much of its ammunition from this arsenal. But once let the gradualness of revelation be established, then most of these damaging features disappear of themselves. When the principle becomes a practical help to interpretation, then the question to be answered will be simply: Does the ethical and spiritual teaching of the older Scriptures "make for righteousness," and, on the whole, is their ultimate goal the highest conceivable good? Mozley, in his lecture, "The End the Test of a Progressive Revelation," has maintained the thesis subsequently defended by Newman Smyth in the words: "The real morality of the Bible is its final morality, the morality in the intention of the Lawgiver from the be-

ginning." In my judgment, Doctor Smyth himself has made the happiest statement of the position held by advocates of the progressive theory that can be found in contemporaneous literature. He writes:

> Divine accommodation to a lower level of human ideas, or imperfect condition of man's knowledge of good and evil, is perfectly moral, in so far as it tends to overcome the imperfect and to help on the development of conscience to that which is perfect; in so far, that is, as it is the accommodation of the teacher to the pupil in carrying out, and solely for the sake of carrying out, the design of the whole course of instruction. Any accommodation to error or imperfection which gives the error new vitality, or makes the imperfect last longer, would not be a justifiable act on the part of the teacher, but rather a participation in the fault of the pupil.

By this reasonable rule every portion of the Bible may unhesitatingly be tried, and its honest application, I am sure, will relieve the venerable volume from the obloquy to which it has been subjected by uncandid critics, who have steadily ignored the chief characteristic of the revelation it contains.

At the outset, it must impress the student of history that the Jewish commonwealth, even in the earlier period and with all its blemishes, far surpassed other ancient civilizations, even at their best, in all that ministers to the moral growth and happiness of society. It is not uncommon in our day to hear pagan morality extolled. A few ennobling sentiments are quoted from poets or philosophers, a few virtuous lives are honored, and with serene self-satisfaction the eulogist closes his reflections with some severe strictures on the barbarism of the Jewish State; but, all the while, he conveniently

overlooks the passionate jealousies, the rancorous rage, the implacable hate, the indecencies worse than adulteries, the deadly cruelties, the sanguinary wars, the fratricidal strife, and the cowardly self-murders, by which Greece and Rome and other venerable nationalities were converted into veritable pandemoniums. From the siege of Troy, on account of Helen, to the evils caused by the fatal beauty of Cleopatra, and from the supremacy of Aspasia over the chief men of Athens to the reign of the notorious Lais of Corinth, savagery, licentiousness, and every form of impurity prevailed. All this is quietly ignored by the admirers of classic paganism; neither do they condescend to notice Roman slavery, that extended even to whites and to artists, teachers, and authors, as well as to peasants; nor gladiatorial shows, where thousands of men were annually butchered for the amusement of other thousands of spectators; nor the countenance given to infanticide by philosophers and statesmen; nor the common indulgence in foulest obscenities by men and women of low and high degree. They read Epictetus, not Herodotus; Antoninus, not Tacitus; and they fail to remind each other and the world that Socrates, in the spirit of his age, visited a prostitute and gravely discussed how she might increase her earnings; how Plato considered humanity outside of Greece as "barbarian" and would hardly have reproved Plautus for declaring that "man is a wolf to the stranger"; and how such enlightened emperors as Trajan, and such refined publicists as Pliny, the younger, commended the liberality of the affluent, who provided for the massacre of their fellow-beings in the bloody arena of the amphitheatre.

The fact is, ancient society was through and through corrupt, sensual, devilish, and, in comparison with it, the Hebrew commonwealth, after it was really organized, and even at the beginning of its history, was humane, tolerant, equitable, industrious, and chaste. There only in those dark days, and even later on, reigned the spirit of charity and fraternity; there only was the sheaf of grain left in the field for the gleaner, and the bunch of grapes in the vineyard for the poor; there only was the stranger guarded from oppression and the slave treated as a man and not as a chattel; and there only were cruel pastimes repudiated and abhorred. It was as an oasis in the desert; often, indeed, invaded by the burning sands around it, but ever affording to the race some drops of cooling water and the protection of umbrageous leaves.

In considering specific objections to the Old Testament, the moral superiority of the Jewish theocracy over other ancient governments should never be obscured, as it suggests God's own leadership and deepens the conviction that the sacred record is trustworthy, whether its offensive features can be adequately accounted for or not. Professor Goldwin Smith, writing in defense of Old Testament legislation, defines it as "a code of laws, the beneficence of which is equally unapproached by any code, and least of all by any Oriental code, not produced under the influence of Christianity."

It is to be noted that this code never introduces any barbarous institution or custom, never originates a ferocious, cruel, or degrading practice, but is ever directed toward the mitigation, the reformation, and

the ultimate suppression of existing evils and vices. Just as high license does not introduce the sale of liquor in a community, but is a restrictive measure looking in the direction of prohibition, and as the laws regulating American slavery did not domesticate that fearful system in the country, but were intended to restrain and ameliorate and prepare the way for total abolition, so the Mosaic legislation met the people on their rude, uncivilized level, and adapted itself to their actual conditions, not for the purpose of leaving them in it or confirming them in it, but that they might be gradually educated out of it and be brought to a higher and permanent plane of thought, feeling, and action. This is illustrated by the provisions enacted to protect the man-slayer from the over-hasty violence of the avenger of blood. A wild kind of lynch-law justice prevailed in the East among native tribes, to which many innocent persons fell victims and which resulted in long and bitter feuds, disastrous alike to industry and to the juridical majesty of the State. Judaism grappled with this evil and ordained that the avenger must not lay violent hands on any homicide other than a willful murderer, forbade money compensation for blood, condemned everything like the vendetta, and appointed cities of refuge as asylums for the suspected. The regulations did not provide a shelter for the assassin. Such a one could be torn from the altar; but in all other cases, the man pursued by his enemy found the right of asylum inviolate. Thus the passions of the people were restrained, their fury moderated, while they were being taught more and more to respect the authority of law and of judicial courts. Ultimately, as

was planned from the outset, private vengeance was suppressed, and the accused man-slayer was dealt with legally by the public tribunals.

The same humane sentiment is conspicuous in the Mosaic enactments regarding slavery, and the same evident intent to effect a final deliverance from the curse. Rabbi Mendes grows indignant at Colonel Ingersoll's statements on this subject in the "North American Review," and tells him that Jehovah did not establish slavery and that the command not to steal had special reference to the theft of human beings. (See Exod. 21 : 16.) He reminds him that the institution existed everywhere in the times of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, and that the statutes relating to it were designed to ameliorate and mitigate what could not very well be summarily abrogated. But, in addition to this, he might have recalled these facts: That slavery under the patriarchs was a very mild type of domestic servitude, somewhat resembling the feudal vassalage of a later period; that in the Hebrew commonwealth, bondage might be incurred by a Jew as a penalty for theft or on account of poverty, but could not be perpetuated and was terminable by the liquidation of just claims against him or by the return of the year of jubilee; that masters were not to treat such as bond-servants but as hired servants, were not to rule over them with rigor, and were not to let them go away empty when their term of subjection was completed; and that, even in the case of slaves drawn from heathen populations, the law of kindness prevailed—they could no more be murdered with impunity than a freeman; they could not be seriously maltreated or injured with-

out regaining their liberty as a compensation ; they were to enjoy one day's rest in seven, were permitted to share with the family in religious worship, were never exposed in a slave market, were not terrorized by a "fugitive slave law," and neither were women made captives in war, who were received by their masters as wives, to be sold afterward for money or to be dealt with as merchandise (Deut. 21 : 10–14).

These precepts and provisions reveal a growing appreciation of the sacredness of human nature and of the inalienableness of human rights. No other nation of antiquity shared in these sentiments. They were foreign to the genius of Egypt and Assyria, and even of Greece and Rome. To have immediately abrogated slavery in those early days would possibly have led to less tolerable forms of punishment to restrain idleness and dishonesty, and would have exposed aliens captured in battle to a more dreadful fate from the unbridled ferocity of the conqueror. The policy, so to speak, was adopted by which the evils of the institution could be reduced to the minimum, recognizing throughout the natural equality of man as man, and preparing the way for the spirit of fraternity developed by Christianity, which has finally put an end to slavery and serfdom wherever the Saviour's name is loved and honored.

Just as we find in the Old Testament a steady growth and expansion of view favorable to human liberty, so do we there also find a process of development conducive to the sanctity of the family. Much fault is found with the Bible, even by those who believe in our times that "husband and wife should not be compelled to live together when love is dead," because of the instances of

polygamy therein presented, and because of the arbitrary power of the husband therein countenanced. On this latter point, Colonel Ingersoll writes heroically: "God did not tell the husband to reason with his wife; she was to be answered only with death; she was to be bruised and mangled to a bleeding, shapeless mass of quivering flesh for having breathed an honest thought." The Rabbi Mendes answered our brilliant agnostic by reminding him that the authority thus rhetorically described could not be exercised apart from "the stately and merciful course of judicial procedure which obtained among the Hebrews," that it was wholly "minatory and preventive," that there is no instance in Jewish annals of its being displayed, and that it was designed to check every movement in the direction of idolatry, which carried in its train human sacrifices, child-burning, and bestiality (Lev. 18 : 21, 22, 24; 20 : 23; 18 : 25, 28; Numb. 25 : 1). We must admit, notwithstanding the rabbi's defense of one aspect of the subject, that, taken as a whole, there are evils connected with the relation of the sexes apparently condoned in the Old Testament, which are hard to reconcile with Christian ideas of the sanctity of marriage. Yet we should never forget that these ideas sprang from the teachings of the very Book that occasions this repulsion, and that, after all, the fault may lie rather in our inability to interpret than in any intentional approval of immorality.

We all know—and if we need information, we can obtain it from Herbert Spencer's "Synthetic Philosophy"—that the primitive relations of the sexes were of the freest and loosest kind, promiscuity, exogamy, polyandry, or polygamy. Later on, as civilization advanced

and the family came to be recognized, we find a facility of divorce and a toleration of indulgence fatally destructive of its integrity. According to Frederick R. Coudert,

> Juvenal speaks of a lady who had married eight husbands in the course of five years. Martial mentions a matron who had taken ten husbands in one month. . . Jerome speaks of a husband who had been widowed twenty times ; the twenty-first lady whom he selected as his companion had had twenty-two husbands.

If this was the state of society under the Cæsars, what must its condition have been in the earlier times of the patriarchs? and if lawless passion could prove so intractable after many centuries of history and is to-day so difficult to restrain, what must have been its wayward power at the beginning? To evolve the family out of the disorders that afflicted the first ages of the world was no easy task. Some evils must be allowed that others may be corrected and that a fair idea of the home may be developed. Polygamy, the common sin, is borne with and countenanced by Jewish legislation ; and yet there are not lacking signs of an ulterior purpose. The dignity of Hebrew women was guarded as in no other Oriental nation. Adultery and the coveting of a neighbor's wife or maid-servant were prohibited. Outrages committed on females were condemned and punished, and the glory of a true wife was extolled in language that has never been surpassed in vividness and beauty. That picture of domestic virtue and devotion portrayed in the last chapter of Proverbs is a fairer exponent of the Bible's conception of marriage than any of the perplexing regulations that have come down to us, and in-

dicates the supreme end God had in view through all his varied dealings with the household. Consider these regulations as measures provisionally adopted on account of the "hardness of the heart," to effect deliverance from graver evils than those which are apparently upheld, and that the world might be brought to appreciate the home as described by Solomon, and many a hard thought against God will be abandoned and many an unworthy suspicion will be discarded.

A few words must be added relative to the disclosure of the divine nature and attributes. Progress is as marked here as in the evolution of legislation and morals. Ewald recognizes five names given to the Supreme Being in the Old Testament, corresponding to five distinct historic epochs. To the patriarchal age he is simply the Almighty; to the covenant dispensation he is Jehovah; to the monarchy the Lord of Hosts; to the prophetic era he is the Holy One; to the Judaism preceding Christ's advent he is Our Lord; and to the Christian world he is Father, a name that exhausts the meaning of all the others. Ewald's scheme, to me, is a trifle fanciful; there is no doubt but that the succession of names adds increasing clearness to the Divine revelation of himself. We move steadily along from the idea of absolute power to self-existence, and then to leadership and supremacy, and after that to purity, perfection, and sovereign authority. His names are all-illuminating and descriptive, and with the blending of them all in the last their crown and glory, we have the thought of measureless love, benignancy, and compassion. But while this slow unfolding of the Creator is apparent, we must be careful not to conclude that intimations were

never given in advance of excellencies whose completed beauty could only be adequately displayed later on. Each step in the process was in some degree prophetic of every succeeding step. Mingling with the primitive disclosures of God's nature are straggling rays of light, faint gleams of something further, something better and more wondrous.

For my meaning recall a few passages selected from the Pentateuch. In Exodus God says: "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy." Then, "The Lord passed by before him and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Similar is the assurance in Deuteronomy: "For the Lord thy God is a merciful God, he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee"; "Then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee." Touching his condescension we have the declaration: "And he said, Behold, the Lord our God hath showed us his glory, and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire; we have seen this day that God doth talk with man and he liveth." When we come to the prophetical books these representations become more spiritual and more encouraging to his people. They indeed stop short of the New Testament revelation, but they are full of moral majesty and beauty. The psalmist

sings: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress, my God; in him will I trust"; and Isaiah, speaking for him, adds: "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee"; "The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel."

A small volume could easily be filled with citations of this sort gathered from the Old Testament, proving that while his spiritual grandeur gradually became full-orbed, there never was a time when some rays of it did not burst through the darkness to lighten man's way on earth.

The Jews, when they appear in history, display unmistakable tendencies toward idolatry, and show only too positively that they have been infected with the gross, carnal superstitions of the East. To deliver them from these corrupting and debasing ideas was no easy task. This every preacher knows who has had dealings with men in this age of Christian enlightenment. Even now it seems natural for them to believe unworthy things of God; to stumble and grope as if in the night, and to think of him as though he were altogether like one of themselves. What then must have been the obstacles in the way of a primitive race, overshadowed by

the horrible religions of its gorgeous but semi-civilized contemporaries, rising to anything like a true conception of the one ever-living God! The process of education must have been slow and difficult, human weakness must often have defeated divine graciousness, and measures must have been taken to remove their blindness which at this late day are hard to understand. But judged by the result, the method was wise, for the world is now blest with an image of the Almighty which is at once glorious in justice and in love. Judged by what has been accomplished, gratitude should take the place of alarm; for criticism, dreaded at the outset and sometimes giving occasion for apprehension, has really forged the best weapon for the defense of the Bible against its infidel adversaries.

Thus has the modern spirit of research unfolded the method of inspiration, as it has also elucidated its nature and furnished the best test of its genuineness. It yet remains to be noted that this spirit has accomplished a final good in bringing out distinctly the supreme aim and crowning glory of inspiration; that is, we are indebted to it for an idea, a criterion, a method, and a sufficient end. And what may this end be? "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." As a result of our critical inquiries, Doctor Fairbairn claims that we have rediscovered the historic Christ. This has been done, not by the recovery of lost manuscripts, but by removing from the original portrait in the New Testament the accumulated traditions, fictions, and superstitious glosses, which, like layers of ancient dust, have sadly obscured the fair lineaments of his face. It follows that we who live on the threshold of a new century

have a more faithful picture of Jesus than was possessed by the world a hundred years ago. We have more accurate knowledge of his person and a more intimate acquaintance with the details of his life than were available to many of the generations which have preceded our own. As he has been brought more and more to light, and as he has emerged more and more from the shadow of ecclesiasticism, it has been made more manifest that in him are concentrated the special revelations of inspiration, and that he himself is their substance and their theme. About him and for him the Bible seems to have been written. Ritschl was so profoundly impressed by this thought that he and Vatke, Biedermann and Zeller, with greater or lesser identity of exposition, insisted on the sole revelation-value of Christ. That is, they have advocated what is called the Ritschlian principle of a personal and only a personal revelation of God and of archetypal man in relation to God, by which the Scriptures are emptied of much of their significance and become a telescope through which a view of the personal revelation may be obtained.

The purpose of this theory is to ally the living soul of man with the living Christ and to lay the foundation for the subjectivity which is a prominent feature of Ritschl's theology.[1] But it is not necessary that this extreme position be occupied for us to see clearly, what investigation has rendered transparently plain, that the Bible is full of Christ and that it is supremely concerned with his person, his mission, his sacrifice, and his undying life, thus opening the way for the direct communion of humanity with his Spirit. Athanasius

[1] "*Unterricht*," p. 2; "*Leben*," Vol. II., p. 279.

used to teach that the Angel of Jehovah, whose appearances are recorded in the Old Testament, was none other than the Second Person in the Trinity, in support of which view Jehovah's own words have frequently been quoted: "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way. . . Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him." There are numberless instances in the Hebrew Scriptures where his advent is heralded, his preaching anticipated, and his suffering death foretold. Without him the Old Testament is a sealed book and has no particular claim on the attention of the Gentile world. That, as St. John declares, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," is confirmed by Christ himself when he says: "Search the Scriptures . . . for they are they that testify of me." He claims that the law is fulfilled in him; that he is the perfect flower of its germinal life and the complete archetype of all its types. Thinking of the promised disclosures of God, he calmly says, They who had seen him had seen the Father, and the letters addressed to the Hebrews, Ephesians, and others, are but commentaries on his own profound and precious sayings. This was recognized by Luther, and hence the test of apostolicity that he applied to the sacred books; and it is now generally agreed that in the person of Jesus, and in his teachings as given in the Gospels and expanded and expounded in the Epistles, we have all knowledge necessary for life and salvation.

Michelet confesses that this is a just view to take of our Lord's ministry, while he condemns what it involves and discards what it implies. He writes: "But what to

love? What to believe? About that there was no precise formula. To love the teacher and to believe on the teacher. To take his very person, a living creed, for a symbol and a creed. This is the very accurate meaning of all that Paul has written and which has been marvelously well stated in this sentence, 'Jesus taught nothing but himself.'" The sentence quoted is from Renan, and it is singular that these brilliant and skeptical Frenchmen should so clearly perceive what many schoolmen and dogmatists have overlooked, that Jesus himself is the "Bible of Humanity."

Luthardt, the eminent German theologian, says: "He makes himself the central point of his every announcement. 'It is I,' is the great text of all his teaching. 'If ye believe not that I am he ye shall die in your sins,' is, in fact, a saying in which his whole doctrine may be summed up." Were this realized as it should be, many of the objections brought against the Old and New Testaments would disappear like mist and darkness before the presence of the sun. In him earth and heaven meet, and God himself, received into his humanity, is reflected on the world. He localizes, in his person, omnipotence; he concentrates, within finite limits, the infinitude, and focuses in his own life the moral splendor of the Everlasting One. In condescension to our infirmities, the Formless has taken form, and that he might be with men and be of them, he was wombed in humanity, incarnated, and born into the world. The exile prophet by the river Chebar beheld above the firmament of gleaming, glowing crystal, and above the majestic manifold wheels and "the all-pervading and enfolding fire," "the likeness of a throne as the appear-

ance of a sapphire stone, and upon the likeness of the throne the likeness as the appearance of a man"; and we now, from our land of exile, discern upon the throne that rises above the mystic sea of glass and above the ten thousand times ten thousand that minister to his glory, "the appearance of a man," even of him to whom, in the fullness of time, it was said, "Sit ye at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

Thus it has come to pass that the manhood of Christ has been made indispensable to the revelation of the godhood of God. Nor is this merely the thought of devout Christian enthusiasm, for even theists, who see in Jesus only an extraordinary human personage, when speaking of the Supreme Being, in whom they profess to believe, at best but reproduce the character of him whose creaturehood they so persistently affirm. Their definitions of God are supplied by him, their vocabulary of his attributes is made up from his discourses, and their ideas of justice, truth, mercy, that sound so sweet, were originally his, not only in words but in actions as well. Whatever may be said in the heat of debate regarding his rank in the universe, "reverential calm" always deepens the impression that no grander and truer conception of God has ever dawned on human thought than shone in the life of Jesus of Nazareth, nor has any sublimer and more rational presentation of duty, of the ideal that should govern man in all the relations he sustains, been made to the world than he declared and illustrated in his brief career. He "squares to rule the instincts of the soul," he gives the clew that leads through the whole labyrinth of obligation, and shows that all its paths unite at one center, and that

center love. The ebb and flow of feeling, the shallow and deep waves of emotion, he explains, prescribe their boundaries and direct their currents. He is the mold into which society and the individual can with safety flow, assured that the impression they receive will accord with the everlasting rule of right and will contribute to their highest good. Everywhere his ethics are recognized as the truest standard of worthy and noble conduct. They are commended by all, they are extolled even by those persons who never transmute them into deeds. The final appeal of the vexed conscience is carried to his tribunal and the perplexing scruples of the sensitive are laid at his feet. He is the ultimate rule of practice, acknowledged without controversy, and no theories of inspiration can add to or take from the authority and splendor of his example.

Sir Joshua Reynolds, in his "History of Painting," when writing on the two styles,—the grand and the ornamental,—discriminates between them by saying that the "grand" does not admit of any addition from inferior sources, while the "ornamental" derives material for embellishment from almost every quarter. He then adds that "Correggio succeeded in the perilous attempt of blending the two." But our Lord transcended the feat of the artist. He has brought together the divine and the human; the Infinitely Grand, to which nothing can be added, and the tawdry, showy finite, that seeks continually new adornment from perishable honors, and he has so blended the two in himself and in the sacred books, that the touch of the divine transforms the human and the transformation of the human humanizes the divine.

Thus he is the sun, the glory, the essence, and the consummation of revelation ; he is its foundation and superstructure, its center and circumference, its source and its stream, its root and its flower ; and, having him, we have everything, and all that the preacher can do is to interpret him as best he can and to persuade mankind to seek in him the fullness of life and blessedness.

In estimating, then, the bearing of recent research on inspiration, I am of those who regard it as distinctly advantageous. That it has occasionally been presumptuous, extravagant in its assertions, and supercilious in its criticisms, having as frequently to retract its opinions as theologians to modify their doctrines, no person with adequate knowledge will controvert. But I have never been able to work myself into the hysteria of fear on that account. To me there is only one calamity more terrible and overwhelming than attacks on the Bible, and that is deliberately to cherish a Bible incapable of withstanding these attacks. The pangs and pains involved in being delivered from error are as nothing compared with the sure moral death which must always accompany the impossibility of bringing to the birth. I am content, then, that careful inquiry can do no harm, and, if it is not careful, the harm will come to him who is reckless and not to the Bible. Luthardt has lately published his confession of faith, in which he makes this touching appeal :

> One thing we ask of the critics is, that they leave the holy history as holy history and not as profane. Another thing we ask is, let it be not prophets and law, but law and prophets, the natural order as confirmed by Christ and by Paul. The last thing we ask is, do not treat the religion of the Old Testament as a develop-

ment from natural religion, for, according to the law of logic, nothing appears in the effect that was not included in the cause. Salvation in Christ is not a supernatural gift unless its beginnings are divine.[1]

Such an appeal, however, is misleading. Let us merely entreat critics and every one else to tell us the truth. Nothing is holy that is not true, and no history is really profane and some other kind sacred, for God is working through all to accomplish the high purposes of his grace. What makes the murder of Uriah sacred history and Abraham Lincoln signing the emancipation proclamation profane history? These contrasts at a glance illustrate the indefensibleness of the distinction. We ask no favors. Let the spirit of research march on. The more she marches, I am persuaded, the more fully will she confirm the credentials of Holy Writ and the more heartily approve and commend the wise saying of Herder: "In order to be assisted, the revelation of God as found in the Bible, and even the entire history of the human race, must be believed, and thus ever return to the great center about which everything revolves and clusters—Jesus Christ, the corner-stone and inheritance, the greatest messenger, teacher, and person of the archetype."

[1] Rev. W. W. Everts' translation in "The Standard," Dec. 14, 1899.

VII

THE REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
  Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
  By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove ;

. . . . . .

Our little systems have their day ;
  They have their day and cease to be ;
  They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith, we cannot know ;
  For knowledge is of things we see ;
  And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness : let it grow.

—*Tennyson.*

VII

THE EMANCIPATION AND TRANSFORMATION OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

THE enlightened Protestant principle is admirably expressed in the words of Wegscheider,[1] the quotation of which may be taken as indicating the spirit and scope of the present discussion :

In the interpretation and criticism of the opinions and doctrines of early times, theologians ought to take greatest care to combine the use of sound reason with the results of the learning of so many centuries. Then only will they follow in the footsteps of the great reformers, who, in their noble struggle against so many injurious errors, never claimed themselves to have made an end of all inquiry, and never grudged to their successors progress in religious knowledge. The teachers of the church ought particularly to endeavor to communicate to the people the teaching of Christ and his apostles regarding God and duty in all its purity ; to show that the truth of this teaching does not depend on ancient dogmatic formulas and pedantic interpretations of biblical passages, but is borne out by the properly developed nature of our own mind ; to no longer try to defend forms of doctrine which were adapted only for the thought of certain people and times, but gradually to lay them aside and adopt a simple form of teaching, such as is indicated in the New Testament itself ; to permit the sparks of true morality and piety to flash from the light of genuine Christian doctrine, instead of offering the smoke of ancient opinions as the light of knowledge.[2]

From this statement we learn that the eminent Ger-

[1] Preface, "*Institutiones Theologiæ.*"

[2] Pfleiderer, "Development of Theology," p. 96.

man does not regard dogma as a fixed and changeless quantity, a conviction which is shared by a more recent writer, the eminent Frenchman, Sabatier. He says:

> In Catholicism the theory of the immutability of dogmas is opposed to history; in Protestantism it is opposed to logic. In both cases the affirmation is shown to be illusory. It is with dogmas, so long as they are alive, as it is with all living things; they are in a perpetual state of transformation. They only become immutable when they are dead, and they begin to die when they cease to be studied, that is, to be discussed.

We have no controversy with the charnel house, and death is the end of argument. If, therefore, it has come to pass that a creed form arouses no debate and is simply ruled out of the contentions of living men, it is clear that it has ceased to be a vital thing; but if it grows, and if in growing it is modified and even revolutionized, we may know that it is not soulless, and is not as yet stricken with decay. Holding to this belief, we ought not to be surprised at the changes wrought in Christian doctrine during the nineteenth century; and if we are disposed at this late day to be intolerant of any further departure from what we have decided must be the teaching of the Bible, we may recall the admonition of Cromwell: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, remember it is possible you may be mistaken." Moreover, if progress has been impossible, and if it is not to be expected, how could learned men, like Hagenbach, Shedd, Dorner, and Pfleiderer, have written as they have about the history of doctrine and of its development? The very titles of their scholarly volumes suggest unmistakably that theological views are continually more or less in a state of flux, crystallizing here and there

around some central thought, and then once more sweeping onward toward a more comprehensive and complete expression of religious truth.

There is current in modern society, and especially among literary people, a very illogical influence from this admitted mutability. Whether it arises from an unconfessed indisposition to pursue serious studies, or from an inexcusable indifference to sacred themes, or from an undisguised loss of confidence in the Bible, and a growing conviction that art, music, and culture must henceforward take up its mission, we shall not attempt to determine ; but there is undoubtedly a widespread impression that doctrinal forms are unnecessary to religion and may even impede its advancement. As they are changing, it is sometimes argued, they cannot be indispensable, though no one would think of applying this logic to other departments of intellectual activity. We never think of saying that as the human body is never stationary and is changing every three or seven years, it is really superfluous. Neither do we maintain that scientific formularies and definitions may safely be dispensed with, and without detriment to science, because they have frequently been recast and have at times been set aside altogether by new ones. Nor do we object to fresh and better expositions of philosophy, knowing very well that these revised and enlarged elucidations are inseparable from its existence and influence. It is only in religion that we seem to lose our common sense, and come to demand light without heavenly bodies, waves without form, spirit without flesh, music without notation, and truth without articulate definition.

And yet I hesitate not to say that a religion without

a theology is a religion without thought; and a religion without thought has no special claims to the respect of thinking men. Nowhere have I found a clearer or more philosophical vindication of this position than occurs in the writings of Sabatier. He regards dogma as a "phenomenon of social life," and contends that "one cannot conceive either dogma without a church, or a church without dogma." Then he continues in this way to discuss the subject:

"Doctrine necessarily becomes for it [the church] an essential thing; for in its doctrine it expresses its soul, its mission, its faith. It is necessary also that it should carry its doctrine to a degree at once of generality and precision high enough to embrace and to translate all the moments of its religious experience and to eliminate all alien and hostile elements." And yet further: "If the life of a church be compared to that of a plant, doctrine holds in it the place of the seed. Like the seed, doctrine is the last to be formed; it crowns and closes the annual cycle of vegetation; but it is necessary that it should form and ripen, for it carries within it the power of life and the germ of a new development. A church without dogmas would be a sterile plant. But let not the partisans of dogmatic immutability triumph; let them pursue the comparison to the end: 'Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and *die*,' said Jesus, 'it bears no fruit.' To be fruitful, dogma must be decomposed, that is to say, it must mix itself unceasingly with the evolution of human thought and die in it; it is the condition of perpetual resurrection." [1]

Well would it be for religion were there a general and hearty recognition of the soundness of this exposition. Then the effusive sentimentalism that decries all doctrinal statements, and is enamored of mist, vagueness, and subtilization would terminate, and then teachers

[1] "Outlines of Philos. of Religion," Book III., Dogma.

who veil their disinclination to explore, meditate, and reason beneath this poetic haziness, would be ashamed any longer to boast of their unwillingness or inability to arrive at specific conclusions, and then all who believe that truth can be stated and systematized, and that in the nature of things it is susceptible of continuous development, would be inspirited to pursue theological investigations, and to pursue them earnestly and independently.

It has been more than once alleged that, in comparison with other sciences, theology has been singularly conservative and unprogressive.[1] While in some respects this representation may be just, it may be so framed as to be on the whole exceedingly unjust. When it implies that theology ought to have made physics one of its departments, and that it ought immediately to have accepted the conclusions of scientists, often at the first immature and liable to revision, and that it, and not the fears of ecclesiastics, responsible as they felt themselves to be for the preservation of church order, has been in the main arrayed against the light, a grievous misapprehension is fostered. I am not for a moment attempting to conceal the fact that there is a native something in theology that indisposes it to change. It is the science of sacred things, and it shrinks from too hastily abandoning positions that have been helpful to the spiritual growth of mankind. Moreover, human opinions are so flexible, the speculations and mental vagaries of the investigator so various, that it has learned to wait, and to be cautious before committing itself to

[1] Draper, "Science and Religion"; White, "Warfare of Science with Theology."

what has yet to be verified. For instance, Prof. A. Goette, a Strasburg zoölogist, has recently declared that Darwin's doctrine of pangenesis has never been adopted, and that "natural selection" or "the survival of the fittest," has been abandoned by men like Romanes, Gulick, Nageli, and Eimer. Ought theology, therefore, to be blamed if it pauses before revising its entire system in harmony with views which experts are reputed to have discarded? Unless it is willing to become merely the shadow of every new hypothesis in physics, it is bound to move slowly and to deliberate before it rushes in where apparently the scientists themselves fear to tread. This necessary hesitancy gives it, I grant, the appearance of sluggishness and immobility, but I am sure it has furnished notable evidence of its readiness to accept and assimilate the latest discoveries in spheres other than its own, when they have established their right to be seriously considered. It ought, moreover, to be said that progress in this department has to deal with an impediment which does not exist elsewhere, namely, the convictions, prejudices, and tenderest associations of the great mass of believers, who have neither time nor disposition to search for themselves, and who resent the disturbance of their mental repose, to which also must be added the very natural solicitude of administrators, bishops, elders, deacons, stewards, and what not, who are convinced that changes in thought may seriously impair the stability and activity of their respective charges.

The theologian, therefore, who is impelled to depart from accepted teachings, has to confront this solid mass that is stirred to oppugnancy by any suggestion of alter-

ation or reform in the authorized standards of belief. He must respect the conscientiousness which it represents, and hence move with the most thoughtful care, and he must harden himself to endure the inevitable invective and proscription which his independence will entail. These, as a rule, are neither slight nor measured. Imagine what must have been the feelings of Frederick W. Robertson, of Brighton, when, having struck out a new path for himself, he is compelled to write: "I stand nearly alone, a theological Ishmael. The tractarians despise me and the evangelicals somewhat loudly express their doubts of me." His only comfort was derived from the persuasion, "It must be right to do right." Let us picture another instance, and observe what a progressive thinker may have to suffer from his colleagues and associates, from the very men whose tastes and scholarship ought to have taught them respectful tolerance and not bitter recrimination. I refer to the celebrated case of the Rev. Dr. Hampden, of Oxford, who, because in 1834 he advocated the admission of dissenters to the university, and who because in his Bampton Lectures of two years before he had assailed traditional theology and had shown it to be a human compound composed largely of patristic and medieval terminology, drew upon himself the atrabilious vindictiveness of many clerical contemporaries and the splenetic criticisms of Newman and Wilberforce. Nor did the tempest subside after its first outbreak. It was renewed with equal virulence in 1847, when Hampden was made Bishop of Hereford, and it was so excessive that Whately was constrained to write of it in very trenchant terms. "There have been," he says, "other

persecutions as unjust and as cruel (for burning of heretics was happily not in the power of the Hampden persecutors), but for impudence I never knew the like. The exhibition of riotous and hostile feeling was startling, even to those who had not anticipated much greatness nor goodness from human nature."

Similar unreasoning violence has been manifested in Scotland, Germany, and the United States, when efforts have been made to emancipate the church from the doctrinal trammels of bygone days. Resentment has surely been stirred by departure from the stereotyped dogmas of the fathers, and I have known members of the church to take offense at their pastor's repudiation of worn-out creeds, when they themselves had lost all confidence in their soundness. Here, then, we have plainly disclosed the difficulty that stands in the way of theological development. Multitudes of Christian people are not in sympathy with it and not a few clergymen share their hostility. They deceive themselves. Usually they defend their devotion to the past by a somewhat loudly proclaimed love of truth, whereas the spirit they exhibit warrants the suspicion that they are animated by a dread of the truth; but whatever their motives, I am not surprised that their opposition renders theologians very careful, and has gone far to create the impression that theology is necessarily unprogressive and is almost irreconcilable with the wonderful strides taken in other departments of thought and inquiry.

Yet I question whether there is any other that has witnessed so great a revolution as has taken place, within the limits of a century, in the governing and determining conceptions of evangelical religion. Doctor

Dorner has gone so far as to call this transformation "the regeneration of theology,"[1] and I have ventured to describe it as an emancipation as well as a transformation. A scholarly friend has just said to me that, on the whole, it has been more radical and wide-reaching than the substitution of the Copernican for the Ptolemaic system of astronomy. To judge from what was taught in its name a hundred years ago, this revision and metamorphosis came not an hour too soon, and, if we recall some of these teachings, we shall only be surprised that it did not come earlier.

A hundred years ago it was common for divines to expound the glorious counsels of the blessed Trinity in a sober, matter-of-fact way, and to refer to "motions" and "resolutions" as though they were recording the proceedings of a Court of Arches or an earthly Presbytery.[2] Without any doubt or misgiving, they assured the people that Deity from all eternity had enjoyed perfect blessedness "in the contemplation of his own perfection," but that "presently" he found that he could get "an additional revenue of glory by creating rational creatures who should sing eternal hallelujahs." Then followed a "motion" to this effect, and eternity gave place to a "parenthesis of time." Man was made and the temptation ordained, and all that everlasting pæans might be sung to God. The fall was described over and over again with extraordinary ingenuity and its deplorable consequences summed up in language such as this: "God could not permit his image to abide near the ugly effigy of the Devil"; everything done by

[1] "Hist. Prot. Theology," p. 424, Vol. II.

[2] "*Schema Sacrum*," p. 217.

an unregenerate man is "a mere sham and dead form of holiness." "If the natural man should begin to relent, to drop a tear for sin and repent, he does nothing but sin; for man, aye, even the newborn babe, is a lump of wrath, a child of hell." "Oh, sad reckoning! as many thoughts, words, actions, so many sins. Thou canst not help thyself. What canst thou do who art wholly corrupt? Nothing but sin." "Unregenerate morality can never please God, and in this state of wrath and curse is loathed by him."[1] And what then? Why, this fallen race, with the exception of an elect seed, rescued through a tremendous sacrifice which, in the language of that day, was likened to a mercantile compensation secured through a hard bargain, was doomed to unutterable torments.

In this theme the theology of the time expatiates with the most lurid rhetoric and manifestly with the keenest relish and satisfaction. "Everything in God is perfect of its kind," writes Boston, "and therefore no wrath can be so perfectly fierce as his; the wonted force of the rage of lions, leopards, and she-bears deprived of their whelps is not sufficient to give a scanty view of the power of the wrath of God." Or let us hear Ralph Erskine: "What must it be to be banished from the Almighty God? But whither must they go? Into everlasting fire. Oh, what a bed is there! No feathers, but fire; no friends, but furies; no ease, but fetters; no daylight, but darkness; no clock to pass away the time, but endless eternity." "Shrieks of horror shall be heard. What woes and lamentations shall be uttered when devils and reprobate and all the damned crew of

[1] See Boston's "Fourfold State"; also Land's "Impartial Testimony."

hell shall be driven into hell never to return." [1] And as though all this was not awful enough, the doctrine was done into meter after this fashion :

> Hot burning coals of juniper shall be
> Thy bed in doom, and then to cover thee
> A quilt of boyling brimstone thou must take
> And wrap thee in, till you full payment make.[2]

These strong views were, I admit, presented in more studied phrase by a more exalted class of theological writers, and their deformity somewhat disguised by a seeming respect for philosophy and by an actual devotion to logic. The system of which they form a part has never been surpassed for logical cohesion and conclusiveness. In this respect it is a model. Admit its first principles and there is no escape from its terrible consequences. These I have reproduced in the powererful speech of divines whose written works have influenced millions, that we might obtain from their coarse way of dealing with these terrors an idea of the revolution that has taken place in theology.

Such preaching as this is hardly conceivable to-day wherever a high degree of intelligence prevails. It would be going too far, however, to assert that it has ceased everywhere. There undoubtedly are communities where it is tolerated ; but even there, as a rule, it has softened several of the harsh features of its message. Pfleiderer, referring to the works of Nitzsch and Twesten, and particularly to Ullman's "Sinlessness of Christ" and Julius Müller's volume on "Sin,"

[1] Consult Graham's "Social Life in Scotland," Vol. II.

[2] Donaldson's "Toothpick for Swearers," Edinb., 1697.

says that "the prevailing aim is to save as much as possible of the traditional matter of the ecclesiastical dogmas," while their harsh and offensive features are toned down by expressions borrowed from Schleiermacher. And not only in Germany, but in France, Great Britain, and America, a similar method has been followed and is still being pursued by some theologians, who either have lost confidence in the system and yet fear to discard it, or have come to see that its continuance depends on its being very radically modified. But while these notable exceptions are to be recognized, it is very manifest that the system itself, especially as expounded even fifty years ago, has lost its hold on the conscience and intellect of the present day. Its influence has waned, and its inexorable logic has only the shadow of its former tyranny over the mind. Multitudes do not hesitate to boast that they have freed themselves from its depressing and melancholy teachings, and the foremost thinkers of the age do not seem bound to respect its theories in constructing theologies. Indeed, so widespread is this defection that were an angel to visit the earth, he would have reason to modify the apocalyptic cry and to proclaim aloud: "The Augustinian theology has fallen, has fallen!"

Its author, Augustine, was unquestionably a remarkable man, and up to the day of his death, A. D. 430, was one of the most potent forces in shaping the future of the church he loved. His life created an epoch in religion unequaled in importance since the apostles and never to be paralleled until the Reformation; for it gave to the world a highly articulated system of doctrine, whose hold on thought was to be second only

to the sustained effect produced by the writings of St. Paul. The apostle had profoundly impressed the intellect of Augustine. It was through the Epistle to the Romans that the son of Monica had been converted. He had also been trained in the schools of the empire. Both currents, the apostolic and the pagan, met in him and resulted in the most elaborate and complicated theology ever developed by human ingenuity. We have already seen, when discussing the "Divine and the Human" in religion, how various philosophies had influenced the development of early doctrine; and how the government of the empire had supplied a model for the recasting of church organization and polity; but now we find this government exerting considerable influence on Augustine's dogmatic system. In this opinion we are strengthened by the various points of seeming agreement between them. His governing conception, which determined all he wrote, was manifestly derived from what he saw under the reign of the Cæsars. The sovereignty of the imperator was absolute and unimpeachable in the fifth century, and his representatives throughout the entire secular hierarchy had to be honored by implicit and unquestioning obedience. Autocratic decrees, however terrible in their consequences, were meekly accepted by citizens, and none of them dared to say to the throned ruler, "What doest thou?" If protests were adventured, death or banishment ensued; and if the mastery at last became unendurable, civil war or insurrections were the dubious remedies. Constitutional rights were unknown when Augustine thought and wrote. It was regarded as in every way just and inevitable that a monarch should do as he pleased with

his own. Humanity, as such, was not looked on as sacred. The sacred thing was the Cæsar and his authority. Everything was tributary to him. And if he chose this favorite or that eunuch to high stations near his person, and if he passed by others of equal, if not of superior merit, it was no man's prerogative to challenge his decisions. To all intents and purposes, officially at least, he could do no wrong, and his subjects, in reality, had no inalienable rights to be disregarded or violated. "The world then was very full of misery; in every state there was a great mass of the poor and wretched, the outcasts of society; while there was an inner circle of elect, honored, and tolerably happy ones for whose benefit the whole system seemed to be constructed and maintained."

By the grim, savage kind of light which these environments cast on the mind of Augustine, he interpreted the sacred page. To him Jehovah was essentially an infinite Cæsar, to question whose proceedings would be rebellion and blasphemy. The whole earth lay at the feet of the dread sovereign, sinful and helpless, devoid of all rights, and justly doomed to everlasting punishment. If he, therefore, should choose any, be they many or few, to be rescued from this awful condemnation, it would solely be of his compassion; and if he passed by the others, or if "the rest he hardened," he would be within the bounds of his absolute authority and would commit no wrong against any one. It availed nothing to say in remonstrance that compassion might and ought to have comprehended all the wretched, for the answer was prompt: the infinitude of compassion was revealed even in the pardon of one sinner,

as sin against an infinite being became itself infinite guilt: and to forgive the transgression involved an infinitude of compassion. Neither did it produce any impression to argue that all God's creatures had an equal claim on his beneficence; for it was affirmed as self-evident and fundamental that they had no claim on him at all; and when it was meekly suggested that it seemed peculiarly hard for the eternal destiny of unhappy millions to be determined for them before they were born and on account of no previous wrong by them committed, the intrepid skeptic was sternly reminded that the clay had no right to debate with the potter why he made it thus. So accustomed was mankind to this style of human government when Augustine wrote, and so oblivious to anything really higher, that, to the mass, there was nothing shocking or unnatural in thinking of the Divine in almost identical terms.

Nor could it be denied that there were many texts in the Bible that seem to warrant this conception, many of them, it is true, grossly perverted, and others forced by grievous manipulation to do service contrary to their intent, but still some that pointed to the sovereignty of the Almighty in providence and salvation. But, as Fairbairn intimates, the error lay in explaining the fatherhood by the sovereignty, instead of explaining the sovereignty by the fatherhood; for if the latter method had been adopted, it would have been seen that God could never fail the humblest of his creatures, and could never foreordain the damnation of any, and certainly could never condescend to trifle with the work of his hands by extending a general invitation to the guilty which he had made no provision to honor, and which,

by his own secret decree, he had rendered impossible for many to accept.

That some features of this Augustinian doctrine seem to correspond to certain teachings of the Bible, no one has seriously questioned; but that it fairly, as a whole, represents the mind of the Spirit is now strenuously denied; and it is worthy of note that forces similar to those which contributed to its development are now working against its preservation. Molded in no small degree at the beginning by approved theories of government, just as soon as these theories had been rejected as obsolete, it was shrewdly suspected that the theological analogies were equally untenable. The wreck of feudalism carried with it into the depths the grim, remorseless system, and only here and there upon the surface masts, spars, and shattered boats survive. When nobler visions of human rights dawned on the world; when it was realized that national governments should be constitutional and ought to be conducted for the good of the governed; when it was perceived that caprice and the exercise of arbitrary authority are unreasonable and perilous in earthly administrations; and when it was decreed that every one, from king or president down to the humblest subject or citizen, must be amenable to law, and sufficient time had elapsed for these revolutionary notions to be assimilated by the people, it became increasingly difficult to believe that God's dominion was ordered contrary to such principles, and was at heart only an enlightened despotism tempered by a display of grace toward the elect. The adoption of the Declaration of Independence, the overthrow of the Bourbons, and the spread of liberal ideas

in Europe, have had much to do in revolutionizing theology. It is now reverently declared that the Creator is bound by eternal obligations to his own nature never to act arbitrarily and partially; that love, to be love, particularly divine love, cannot discriminate against any when all are equally guilty; that the humblest creature has rights which the Almighty himself, if he would preserve the loyal obedience of the universe, must respect; and that it is impossible to imagine anything being beautiful, or worthy, or glorious in him which is contemptible and shameful in ourselves.

As yet we have no theology wrought out under modern influences worthy to take the place of the no longer credible Augustinian system. At present we are in a transition state. We have done with the old, and we have not been able to satisfy ourselves with the new. Very creditable attempts have been made in Europe and America to provide a substitute; but these performances leave much to be desired, often lacking in logical precision, or deficient in philosophical depth, or sadly wanting in scriptural authentication. But we must not despair. Original theologians are rarer than original poets. They only appear occasionally. We must possess our souls in patience. Probably the time has not yet arrived when the new theology can be adequately fashioned. More data are demanded. The speech of criticism is not so assured as it has been, and in some respects the voice of science falters. To-morrow may prove more fatal to aspiring skepticisms than were the famous Ides of March to Julius Cæsar. Possibly not much is being lost by the delay; and when the constructive genius at last is sent by God, it may be that

his coming will be timed, as all God's providential mercies are, to meet the special exigencies of a crisis in the religious world. An English writer, however, has well said :

> No previous period in the history of the church has had a better right to examine critically the dogmatic systems transmitted to it, than the present. Indeed, it is under a peculiar obligation to probe and test their structure and foundations. A great critical movement in science, philosophy, and history has changed our intellectual habits, corrected and raised the standard of proof, and discredited many theories previously unquestioned. In every field fresh truths have come to view, shedding new light on the ways of God and on human nature, as well as on the essential and historical relations of God and man.[1]

Whither all this accumulated light is to lead, and how it will be utilized by modern methods of inquiry, no one at this hour can accurately foresee. But while we cannot sketch with precision the theology of the future, we can point out several tendencies which are significant in themselves, and which may be taken as indicative of the goal toward which religious thought is journeying. What these tendencies are, I undertake to describe as best I may, conscious of my liability to err, but sincerely anxious to afford a reliable and intelligible view of their peculiarities and characteristics.

Among them I assign a prominent place to a marked and unmistakable inclination toward humanism. Since the Reformation, this spirit has never been entirely absent from the Christian world ; but usually it has identified itself with other than evangelical doctrines. The term in the sixteenth century was applied to two

[1] Chapman, "Jesus Christ and the Present Age," p. 170.

classes who were devoted to the new learning, and who expected much from the softening influences of culture on society. These classes, speaking geographically, were trans-Alpine and cis-Alpine. The German was distinguished by his reverence and religiousness; the Italian, by his taste and skepticism. Consequently, German humanism gave the age Reuchlin and Erasmus, scholars and reformers; while Italian humanism was interested in Platonic academies, in literature and art. From the first class, in due course of time, proceeded a school of religious thought which has always laid great stress on culture, and whose teachings have been broad and sympathetic, revealing in gracious philanthropies "the light and sweetness" by which they were generated. Wherever such a spirit now exists, and where the doctrines taught are characterized by a deep and tender regard for man, and are beautiful with the sentiments of the divine fatherhood and the brotherhood of the race which we associate with all refining enlightenment, we should recognize humanism. Not, strictly speaking, the humanism of the Reformation era, but rather the humanism of Christ, concerning which, though he slightly changes the form of the word, Coleridge writes when he is painting the primary falling away of the church:

> This was the true and first apostasy, when in council and synod the Divine Humanities of the gospel gave way to speculative systems, and religion became a science of shadows under the name of theology, or at best a bare skeleton of truth, without life or interest, alike inaccessible and unintelligible to the majority of Christians.

Of these humanities, we obtain a fair idea from

the following account of the original principles of our faith :

> We are too much accustomed to look upon the introduction of Christianity as a mere change of opinions about God and the next life, instead of what it really was, a moral and social revolution of incalculable effect. Christianity contained in its essential principles a most powerful solvent of clanhood and of the whole social system of our forefathers. To a people who recognized no tie between man and man except that of kindred, or that between the chieftain and the follower, it proclaimed the universal brotherhood of mankind. To people who looked upon noble birth as something divine, who bought their wives like slaves, and held other men in slavery, it proclaimed the equality of all human souls in the sight of God, without distinction of male or female, bond or free. To a people who exposed their children, and lived by war, it proclaimed the sacredness of human life. To a people who regarded all the members of a family as involved in the crime of one, it proclaimed individual responsibility. To a people who looked upon work as the portion of women and slaves, it proclaimed the dignity of free labor the initiated co-operation.[1]

But from these ennobling ideals, the church gradually fell away ; and over this apostasy, she is sorrowing to-day ; and she is seeking now to return to these gospel humanities which mean so much to society and to the world at large.

Toward this result Unitarianism, both in Europe and America, has in no small degree contributed, and in less measure Universalism also. The former of these bodies has steadfastly antagonized Calvinism—another name for Augustinianism—and representatives of its views prior to the organizations of its churches have suffered bitter persecution rather than subscribe to

[1] Armitage, "Childhood of the English Nation."

what they regarded as fatal to the unity of God and the social happiness of man. With the Quakers and Baptists, they contended heroically for freedom of thought and conscience; they took the lead in benevolent enterprises; were among the foremost assailants of slavery; and were devoted, as they now are, to the sovereignty of liberalism and charity in religious thought and life. Of their labors in these directions, too much cannot be said. We are all their debtors, and only churlishness would dispute the obligation. Their spirit to a great extent has permeated the orthodox churches, and their sentiments—I do not say doctrines—have tempered and softened the teachings of many pulpits.

Yet we shall only deceive ourselves if we imagine that the movement we are studying is toward Unitarianism as a doctrine. It is not. Frederick Denison Maurice, one of its earliest champions in England, and himself the son of an honored Unitarian, in his "Essays" is so far from inclining toward his father's belief that he hesitates not to say that if Unitarians are to hold to Christ and Christianity at all, they must hold to them in a deeper sense than they do.[1] Also J. Baldwin Brown, while appreciative of the testimony these disciples have borne to the equal love of the All-father, perceives the limitations of their message and its inadequacy to help and bless mankind. He writes:

> But there the [Unitarian's] ministry ends. He can bear witness against partiality in God, but he has feeble means, in his creed, of bearing witness to his love. "Hereby know we the love of God, because he hath laid down his life for us." How does the Unitarian know it? What can he tell us about it which can com-

[1] Tulloch, "Religious Thought in Britain," p. 280.

fort, heal, strengthen, or gladden poor, torn, sin-stained, sin-tormented hearts? . . The great, toiling, struggling mass find no comfort in his gospel, because no life, and in the deepest sense, no love.[1]

And, therefore, for this reason, or for some other, this school of religious thought seems to have little power of self-propagation. It proceeds to make converts within only a limited area, and the area does not appear to expand.

This has not escaped observation in England, where even the undoubted genius of Martineau has failed to arouse any extensive interest in the multiplication of adherents. When in America, at the beginning of this century, the separation occurred between the Unitarians and the Orthodox, the "defection was 'circumscribed within' very narrow boundaries." "A radius of thirty-five miles from Boston as a center would sweep almost the whole field of its history and influence." Admittedly, its completeness within these limits was remarkable. It included men of letters, judges, teachers, and indeed, the best and most cultured minds of New England.[2] But, nevertheless, it speedily reached the end of its conquering energy. Not all the brilliancy and eloquence of its leaders, nor the wonderful preaching power of Channing, the Wares, the younger Buckminster, nor the zeal and ability of their successors, Bellows, Thomas Starr King, and James Freeman Clarke, could impart to it the charm and force necessary for continuous and ever-enlarging victories. That it has domesticated itself in various important communities since the beginning

[1] "First Principles of Eccles. Truth," p. 359.

[2] Bacon, "History of American Christianity," p. 250.

of the century, and that its supporters, both lay and cleric, are highly respected and entitled to respect, is acknowledged without the least hesitancy or reluctance. Still, the striking impotence and infecundity of the denomination are as manifest at the present hour as at any previous period. The note of universality as a religion seems to be lacking.

To say, by way of explanation or apology, that Unitarianism is specifically fitted to the cultured classes, is only to render the absence of this note more painfully conspicuous, and also to imply that its teachings are seriously divergent from that gospel which from the lips of Christ, was so precious to the poor and illiterate. No, the tendency I am interpreting is not toward Unitarianism. Though influenced and stimulated by it, this tendency transcends its limitations and flows onward in other channels.

The new humanism which has transformed much of our recent theology is essentially evangelical. While it rejects the hard, rigid, and arid features of Augustinianism, and of its offspring, Calvinism, it cherishes the fundamental doctrines of grace, and finds the key to their meaning in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. It talks not at all about predestinations and reprobations; it does not dwell on the divine wrath; feels that such preaching has been greatly overdone; it has no confidence in limited atonements or in anything "limited" that represents the Almighty, except his anger; it has little patience with the "schemes of redemption," presumptuously attributed to his wisdom, which not infrequently have furnished evidence of men's folly; but instead, it magnifies the love of God; beholds

that love in the sacrifice of Christ; believes that through that love humanity is begotten again to love, and when perplexed and overborne by the saddening mysteries of life, cries out

> I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
> And gather dust and chaff, and call
> To what I feel is Lord of all,
> And faintly trust the larger hope.

Of those who have been foremost in the development of this new humanism, it is not always possible to speak without reserve. They should be regarded as pioneers whose enthusiasm may have betrayed them into errors. Nor is it necessary that we should pause to consider what to us may seem erroneous, when our only concern is with the main and unique characteristic of their work. We go back to Herder, who had much to do with its revival in modern times, and he defines it for us in this concise and comprehensive way: "Christianity is the ideal religion, and religion is ideal humanity." And further:

> In the heart of Jesus was written: God is my father and the father of all men: all men are brothers. To this religion of humanity he dedicated his life, which he was ready wholly to offer up, if his religion might be that of all men. For it concerns the fundamental nature of our race, both its original and final destiny. Through it the weaknesses of mankind serve to call forth a nobler power; every oppressive evil, human wickedness even, becomes an incentive to its own defeat.

Subsequent German theology, while often differing in important conceptions from those of Herder, has continually reproduced his spirit, not merely in writers like Schleiermacher, but in others, like Rothe and Dorner.

Martensen, the Danish theologian, declares that "the great problem of the modern age is the living union of Christianity and humanism"; and onward to the days of Ritschl, Hofmann, and Kattenbusch, the endeavors among brilliant scholars to bring about this union have been unceasing.

Great Britain, likewise, has shared in these enlightened labors. In England, what is known as the "Broad Church," represented by such men as Maurice, Kingsley, and Robertson, themselves in no small measure influenced by Coleridge, antagonized the narrowness of Anglicanism and Calvinism; while its great poet, Tennyson, struck the keynote of its lofty anthem in the magnificent ascription, "Strong Son of God, Immortal Love." The crowning thought of Maurice may be summed up in the words: "The truth is that every man is in Christ; the condemnation of every man is that he will not own the truth—he will not act as if it were true that except he were joined to Christ he could not think, breathe, live a single hour." But Maurice had learned this from an earlier writer, and one to whom the entire school of liberal evangelical theology is indebted, and he a layman and a Scotchman, Thomas Erskine, of Linlathen. In 1820, his first book appeared, and in 1828 he developed the thought that pardon is already granted to every sinner in the mission and death of Christ. He says: "The pardon of the gospel is in effect a declaration on the part of God to every individual sinner in the whole world that his holy compassion embraces him and the blood of Jesus Christ has atoned for his sins." Furthermore, "Salvation is the healing of the spiritual diseases of the soul"; and eternal life "the communica-

tion of the life of God to the soul."[1] These opinions startled orthodox Scotland, and led to much disputation and anguish, though something like them is not now uncommon in Edinburgh. Doctor Chalmers did not entirely disapprove of what Erskine wrote regarding "the freeness of the gospel"; and Dr. Macleod Campbell expanded hints received from this writer into a treatise on the atonement, and traces of his views may be detected in the writings of Professor Seeley, and of others who have made for themselves a name in literature and religion. One who did much in the same direction, though classified as a moderate Calvinist, was Andrew Fuller, a Baptist preacher, a friend of Robert Hall and a leader in the foreign mission enterprise. His writings are rugged, simple, strong, lacking in charms of elegant composition, but from their earnest sincerity carrying conviction to the inquiring mind. It is not too much to say that he did for Nonconformist theology in England what Hopkins was largely instrumental in doing for America. Among these leaders of thought in America, and easily equal with the greatest, we recognize Henry Ward Beecher, Dr. Horace Bushnell, and Bishop Phillips Brooks.

These distinguished men, however, have not been alone in their humanizing ministry. They have been chieftains in an army of no mean proportions and one that is increasing every year. Men and women who have been familiar with preaching in this country for the last fifty years can hardly have failed to observe a very significant change in its predominating tone. Sermons on eternal punishment are exceedingly rare, and,

[1] Tulloch, "Religious Thought in Britain," pp. 140, 142.

rarer still, discussions on the decrees of God. Discourses on the divine love are increasingly frequent, and the gracious work of Christ and the sanctifying mission of the Holy Spirit are receiving more and more attention. Less is heard about the privileges and glories of the elect and more about the duties of God's children, and, if not so much time is given to descriptions of everlasting felicity, it is because the feeling is stronger than in the past that the church should try to do more than she has done to promote temporal felicity. Eschatology has lost much of its old charm for the majority of cultivated people. They at least have come to realize, with no small degree of mortification, that the most scholarly interpretations of unfulfilled prophecies and the most confident predictions regarding the end of all things have so frequently miscarried and come to nothing that they may well be excused if they decline to dogmatize on what seems to be beyond the reach of discovery. If preachers hesitate to speak on these themes it is not because they fear the criticisms of worldly people ; it is because they fear the reproach of their own conscience should they continue to talk on subjects which have exhausted the energies and wasted the lives of noble men like Miller, Eliot, and Cumming in fruitless expositions, while practical work demands the immediate doing for the salvation of the individual and society. That there is still a large number of devout souls who conscientiously feel that the principal business of the saint is to study the future and to proclaim the world's impending doom,—which is often done with the most singular cheerfulness,—we do not overlook, just as we are not oblivious to the fact that a yet larger number

profess continued allegiance to the doctrines of John Calvin.

But what I maintain is that the tide has turned, that the drift is away from the hard coast-line and narrow inlets of his system to the tideless ocean of infinite love. And even those who yet profess fealty to the old school have, in most instances, departed farther from it in spirit than they themselves may realize. They too feel the influence of humanism. In the United States, to-day, sermons of the Cotton Mather or Jonathan Edwards type are few and far between. If it is answered that better would it be for the church were it otherwise, I can only say that that is not for me to discuss. I am trying to point out what is, not what might have been; and I simply claim that the spirit of humanism has taken possession of the modern pulpit, and that it prevails so completely that Augustine and Calvin would not recognize as theirs the theology which some learned men yet profess to expound in their names; while in the majority of instances preachers of the gospel have discarded that theology altogether and are proclaiming simple evangelical truths in so genuinely a human way that the world is coming to perceive that Christianity is not, as has been suspected, the religion of the priest, the scholar, and the aristocrat, but is essentially and pre-eminently the religion of humanity.

Another tendency to be noted and examined, and one rich in possibilities, reveals itself in the persistent endeavors to find for theology a scientific basis. The older orthodoxy maintained that religious dogmas were true or false "without any reference to a subjective standard of judgment." "They were true as pure data

of revelation or as the propositions of an authorized creed settled long ago. Reason had so far nothing to do with them. Christian truth, it was supposed, lay at hand in the Bible, an appeal to which settled everything." But this principle, which seemed so simple and satisfactory to believers in the eighteenth century, has not, at least in these terms, maintained its ascendency over their children. Without necessarily controverting the authority of the Bible, the question arose before the century closed and has commanded more and more attention ever since, whether its interpretations ought not to be tested by an appeal to the actual in man and in nature, and whether their verification by this process would not impart to them the certainty which is associated with scientific demonstrations. In working out this problem more than one general plan or philosophic theory has been devised, and in some instances the experiment of application has proven too destructive for it to be adopted. Rationalism, as it is called, is an example in point. As a rule, from the days of Kant until now it has assumed too much and has had to change its grounds too often for its conclusions to be long respected. The important and ennobling influence of Kant's philosophy must be conceded, and yet it is difficult to reconcile some of its speculations with the claims of Christianity as a historical religion, and it becomes well-nigh impossible in the hands of Ammon, Bretschneider, and Wegscheider. When we come to Paulus, at Heidelberg, the discord reaches an alarming stage. There the miracles of Christ are accounted for on the supposition that they were merely remarkable but perfectly natural, parabolical events. Herder, be-

fore Paulus, had manifested a dislike for the miracle, though he regards the wonders of the baptismal scene, the transfiguration, and the resurrection, "as the three bright spots in the celestial authentication of the consecrated one." And yet when he has said this he adds, "They have a secret advocate in the human heart," leading us to doubt whether he is attaching value to them as outward realities at all. He is unquestionably at one with Lessing in the position that the truth of a doctrine cannot be dependent on miracle. "Was it necessary for fire to fall from heaven two thousand years ago in order that we may now see the bright sun? Must the laws of nature have been then suspended if we are now to be convinced of the internal necessity, truth, and beauty of the moral and spiritual kingdom?" [1] The answer, from the very form of the question, can be anticipated; but this denial of supernatural interpositions brought into doubt and debate the supernatural itself, and theologians were compelled to cry a halt when the foundation of all religion was assailed. In our day critical rationalism assumes, as one of the first principles to be accepted in historical investigation, the impossibility of the supernatural. But that which the rationalist asserts to be impossible, multitudes of the human family believe, and it is the very issue under discussion. It cannot be disposed of in this off-hand manner. Here, therefore, it is evident that this kind of rationalism has not succeeded in furnishing anything like a scientific basis for theology.

Failure, however, along this line has not prevented fresh attempts along others. Idealism in Schleier-

[1] Pfleiderer, "Development of Doctrine," pp. 37, 103.

macher and Coleridge, teaching that "there can be no truth which does not rise out of and answer to the human mind," resulted in the elevation of consciousness as the ultimate criterion of an alleged revelation. Consequently the great German proceeds, from his own inner life and experience, to give an account of the Christian faith, and assumes that the experience of the church is identical with his own. But this doctrine in its original form has been usually regarded as too visionary and mystical to really serve a scientific purpose. A modified form of it, however, in Great Britain has met with more favor. There Doctor Mearns, 1818, taught that it was impossible to judge of "the divine origin of Christianity apart from a consideration of its real nature, both as revealing the character of God and as bearing on the character of man." On this subject, Erskine writes:

> The reasonableness of a religion seems to me to consist in there being a direct and natural connection between a believing of the doctrines which it inculcates, and a being formed by these to the character which it recommends. If the belief of the doctrines has no tendency to train a disciple in a more exact and more willing discharge of its moral obligations, there is evidently a very strong probability against the truth of that religion. What is the history of another world to me unless it have some intelligible relation to my duties or happiness?

He had testified, before this, that he had perceived a light in the gospel narrative which entirely satisfied his reason and conscience, and he did not hesitate to intimate that had it been otherwise he could not have accepted the record. In this connection, when speaking of Christianity, he says: "I must discern in the history

itself a light and a truth which will meet the demands both of my reason and conscience. In fact, however true the history may be, it cannot be of any moral and spiritual benefit to me until I apprehend its truth and meaning." Views similar to these, if not identical, have taken hold of a large portion of the Christian community, and it is believed by many that a true interpretation of the Scriptures will meet with a response in the soul, and that a doctrine actually repugnant to man's spiritual and moral nature must be set aside as doubtful, if not discarded as false. This principle, it is admitted, may be too vigorously applied, and it may be sadly perverted; but it is, nevertheless, confidently asserted that it indicates the direction in which a scientific basis for theology will be discovered at last.

It is specially interesting to observe how this clew has been followed in France, and to what consequences it has led. We all know that the French mind is eminently critical; that, in Descartes, it antagonized the scholastic reasoning of the Middle Ages; and that it has acted as a kind of dissolvent for antique dogmatisms. It was then only natural that, after the revival of 1832, at which time religious feeling reassumed sway, and such books as Chateaubriand's "*Les Martyrs*" and Joseph de Maistre's "*Du Pape*" were welcomed by a host of readers, there should be a disposition on the part of some who had experienced the new current of life to criticize their faith. This was done with much thoroughness, though not always with the most gratifying results. After some years of this searching process, about 1860, several earnest men brought up under the revival, set out to Germany that they might there

study the condition of theological science and historical criticism. They returned from their sojourn convinced that the great conflict of our time is not only between science and revelation, but between the scientific spirit on the one side, and on the other, religious truths or teachings and Christian experiences. This conflict, they determined, must be brought to an end; for there ought to be no discord between the scientific method and the Christian faith.

Well, how did they proceed? Their explanation begins with the Christian consciousness, and their solution of the problem is a mystical solution. They announced as fundamental the indwelling of God in the heart of every man. God, they argued, is a personal and transcendent being; but he is also immanent in his creatures, and is thus the source and inspiration of piety. Faith is the filial and absolute abandonment of self to the paternal direction of God; it invites him to act on life internally and externally. By his internal action he causes joyous assurance of sonship, transforms into his own image and communicates his own moral excellencies, justice, love, holiness; and by his external providences, by the vicissitudes, trials, and chastisements he sends, he inculcates gratitude, confidence, submission, self-sacrifice, and surrender to the divine will. Regeneration is this work of death to self and of life in God, initiated by Jesus Christ and effected through the two-fold activity already noticed. It is claimed that this new life is the fundamental experience, the fact that no amount of theorizing can invalidate, and that being fact, it constitutes a true basis for the construction of scientific theology, which consists in the

explanation of the initial fact itself. The school which maintains these opinions is called in France "*Symbolo-Fidéisme*," because we are saved by faith independently of creed, and because the explanation or dogma formulating religious experience can never adequately define the movements and magnitudes of spiritual realities, and must, therefore, be only an imperfect and temporary symbol by which the church, in the philosophic language of the day, tries to express the postulates of the Christian faith. These postulates are always the same; but the interpretation will vary with the intelligence of the interpreter and be governed by the advance of knowledge. They being fixed, and no limits being imposed on the mind that strives to comprehend and formulate them, it is claimed that a scientific basis for theology has been established, and that the method employed in developing this theology meets the demands of the scientific spirit.

As might be expected, considerable latitude of belief prevails among the adherents of this school. M. Ménégoz, for example, holds to the fall, to the supernatural birth of Christ, to his resurrection, and to most of the gospel miracles; while M. Manebian doubts several of these points, and he and others entertain conflicting views about our Lord, his divinity, his pre-existence, and the object and effects of his suffering. While they do not harmonize in expositions, they insist that they are all working from a true scientific basis, and that the results will become increasingly satisfactory. Whether they are warranted in this confidence or not, it cannot be denied that their fundamental conception is influential in France. It is well known that the theological

seminary formerly located at Strasburg, but which was removed to Paris in 1877, or, strictly speaking, that portion of it that desired to remain French, has distinguished itself by expounding and defending the new theology. Pastors and churches that have passed from rationalism, and have not been satisfied with liberalism, under the influence of religious revival and the revival of historical study, have been drawn to this movement, which seems to meet the needs both of their spiritual nature and of the critical faculty. In other parts of the world the "*Symbolo-Fidéisme*" philosophy has gained not a few adherents, chiefly through the writings of Professor Sabatier, and through the circulation of a popular treatise by M. Ménégoz entitled "*Reflexions sur l'Evangile du Salut.*" This philosophy very likely will not be able to fulfill all of its promises; but, nevertheless, it is a sign of the times that should not be ignored. It accentuates a tendency. Disguise it as we may, there is a widespread craving for a theological system that shall rest on a scientific basis, and shall be at one with the scientific spirit. It would have this built on documents whose value has been scientifically determined, and on the facts of consciousness and experience scientifically studied. "*Symbolo-Fidéisme*" is but symptomatic of this more general movement, which cannot be arrested, and for whose healthful development our theological professors must be held responsible in the future.

There is a third and final distinct tendency in modern theology to be taken account of in this study. I refer to the trend and current of its investigations, setting more and more in the direction of Christ. Not the

decrees of the Almighty, nor the metaphysical disquisitions on trinality, nor the offices and authority of the church, are the subjects of supreme importance to the thinking religious world of to-day. Now, as perhaps never in the past, it is realized that the interpretation of the historical Jesus should precede these and similar inquiries. As Principal Caird has taught, the doctrine of our Lord's person and offices will, in the future, constitute "the *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ*." Christ himself being the revelation of the Father and the founder of the church, if we would understand them we must begin by understanding him. Because of this principle, it has been said that the theology of the nineteenth century is Christocentric, a term, to me, a trifle strained and affected, but intended to convey the idea that as the solar system is heliocentric and not geocentric, so our Lord himself, and not a speculation or an institution, is the very heart and soul of the Christian system, and that any religious doctrine, to be worth anything, must revolve around him and derive its lustre from his light. Thus Herder wrote of him, of his person, and not exclusively of his teachings, and, according to his Weimar installation sermon, represented him as the real source of our participation in the divine nature and of the glorious equality we enjoy in the feast of love. Martensen, whom I have already quoted, affirmed that "Christianity is essentially Christ himself"; and so strong a hold had this idea on Schleiermacher that, while he did not deny his historicity, he maintained what appears a contradictory position, that Christ is the product of the Christian consciousness, and that the Christian consciousness has been formed and

continued by Christ. Hegel also, though not believing the doctrine of the two natures, held that the historical Saviour was conscious of being himself one with the Divine will, and that he brought home the great truth that God is not afar off, but is present by his love in the human heart. Dorner, representing the eclectic mediating theology of Germany, argues that, as Christianity is the absolute religion, it necessitates an absolute God-man as its center, "the central individual," who is not only the center of humanity, but also of the entire spiritual world.

Most of these judgments were mainly the result of speculations, but the speculations prepared the way for the critical study of Christ's life, which, in its turn, has rendered him more real to faith and begotten a profounder love for his person. Of the importance of this study, we have no doubt; but we hesitate to speak of it, as some of our contemporaries have done, as actually resulting in the recovery of the historic Christ. Let us estimate the exact significance and necessary limitations of these inquiries. They have not made any perceptible additions to the facts we have in the four Gospels; they have not increased our knowledge of our Lord's earthly career; and they have not confirmed what we know by new light from ancient literature. They have served to harmonize the accounts furnished by the evangelists; they have succeeded in correcting and enlarging our ideas of the social conditions prevailing when Jesus appeared; they have also explained, by interpreting the customs and traditions of the age, many interesting details; and they have imparted a certain vividness and realness to the entire

story by their geographical descriptions and by the pains they have taken in reproducing scenery, buildings, routes of travel, costumes, and other features of the country and age. All this is an undoubted gain, and we ought to be grateful to the men who have toiled so zealously in this field. But our appreciation and admiration ought not to carry us too far. These critical studies have not altered a feature nor modified the portrait of the Christ as presented in the Gospels; and it is, therefore, misleading to credit them with so remarkable an achievement as the recovery of the historic Christ. They have not restored him to history; for he could never be lost so long as the Gospels were preserved. But they have restored history to him in the sense that they have made it tributary to a better and more accurate knowledge of his environment and movements.

The abundance of the labors performed in this cause is itself one of the chief features distinguishing the nineteenth century from its predecessors. No century has been so prolific as ours in biographies of our Lord, critical, romantic, and sentimental. Several of these are only reproductions of previous volumes, differing in arrangement and style, original in modes of coloring, but supplying no fresh information. Some of them derive their sole significance, not from their subject, but from the name of the author, and have no historical value whatever; but this endless stream of publications, in which necessarily there can be no substantially new light, indicates the hold that the theme has on the popular mind and heart.

The world seems never to weary of the story of Jesus,

and is prepared to listen to it over and over again. This popular interest has been manifest from the time that the "*Leben Jesu*" of Strauss startled conservative faith in Germany. Of the real trend of this book, an impression may be formed from these statements: "The author knows that the essence of the Christian faith is entirely independent of his critical inquiries. The supernatural birth of Christ, his miracles, his resurrection and ascension, remain eternal truths, however much, as historical facts, they may be doubted." One can readily imagine to what extremes of denial he would be led in future publications from such a premise as this; but it is interesting to observe that while he undermines the very foundations of faith, he has this, and much more like it, to say of Jesus:

> As little as man will ever be without religion will he be without Christ. For to think to have religion without Christ were no less absurd than to think to enjoy poetry irrespective of Homer, Shakespeare, and their kind. And this Christ, so far as he is inseparable from the highest forms of religion, is an historical, not a mythical, person; a real individual, no mere symbol.

Such concessions, while indicating the wonderful veneration all men have for the Master, would not satisfy the public, and the appearance of the "*Leben Jesu*" became the signal for controversy along the lines indicated by its author, and for book after book professedly devoted to the study of our Lord's earthly life. They bore on their title-pages the names of Steudel, Eschenmayer, Wolfgang Menzel, Hengstenberg, Ullmann, Tholuck, and last, though not least, the name of Neander, called by some of his disciples "the last of the Fathers." Into the merits of the views developed

by those writers, it is not for me to enter. It is enough to know that they traversed and retraversed a great deal of ground and served to deepen the impression that Jesus really lived, and that the account given in the New Testament must be taken as history, miracles and all, or it is of hardly any value whatever.

The lull that followed the conflict precipitated by the volume of Strauss was once more disturbed by Renan's "*Vie de Jesus*," issued from the Paris press in 1863. This brilliant production has been variously estimated. While it has been decried by many as "the most sacred of all histories done into a French erotic romance," and while it has been denounced in unmeasured terms, its charm cannot be denied. It fascinates and dazzles; and if read in the light of its closing paragraphs, it cannot fail to amaze. Let us recall these passages:

> This sublime person, who each day still presides over the destinies of the world, we may call divine, not in the sense that Jesus absorbed all divinity, or was equal to it (to employ the scholastic expression), but in this sense, that Jesus is that individual who has caused his species to make the greatest advance toward the divine. . . Whatever may be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed. His worship will grow young without ceasing; his legend will call forth tears without end; his sufferings will melt the noblest hearts; all ages will proclaim among the sons of men, there is none born greater than Jesus.

A beautiful tribute truly, though it leaves much to be desired by those of us who cannot explain the claims and the works of Jesus without going further. Nevertheless, from Renan, even this is invested with peculiar significance, and his book itself once more stimulated the growth of Messianic biographical literature.

In 1865 appeared in England "*Ecce Homo*," which excited considerable attention; and in 1867 Keim's great work, "*Geschichte Jesu von Nazara*," etc., that threatened the very foundations of faith. These books have been rivaled, and in some instances, excelled, by others, bearing the names of Weizsäcker, Beyschlag, Weisse, Pressensé, Gess, Luthardt, Volkmar, Lang, Grimm, Dupanloup, Brougaud, Didon, Farrar, Geikie, and Edersheim. This list is sadly imperfect, but it is sufficient to show how large a place this one life occupies in the thought of mankind, and its growing prominence in the development of theology.

It would not receive the extraordinary attention that it does were it not for the conviction, which, if not always expressed, is deeply felt, that on the conclusions reached regarding it depends the future of Christian doctrine as well as of Christian progress. By a providential process,—God working through these multiplied publications,—the makers of theology are being compelled to make the Saviour, not sentimentally, but scientifically, the center of their systems; and as mankind opens its eyes to what is taking place and perceives that metaphysical speculations are being relegated to the shadowy background and that Jesus is being brought more and more to the front, love springs up in its heart; and as more will be undertaken when inspired by love for a person than by veneration for a creed, the prospects are that the church is just on the eve of her noblest enterprises and her grandest victories. It was Frederick Robertson who wrote:

> My whole heart's expression is "none but Christ," . . to feel as he felt; to judge the world and to estimate the world's

maxims as he judged and estimated. To realize that is to feel none but Christ! But, then, in proportion as a man does that, he is stripping himself of garment after garment till his soul becomes naked of that which once seemed part of himself; he is not only giving up prejudice after prejudice, but also renouncing sympathy after sympathy with friends whose smile and approbation were once his life.[1]

When theology itself, like the preacher, has ultimately been transformed by the love of Christ, and has rid itself of its traditional garments, has completely abandoned ancient prejudices, and has determined to fashion its judgments in harmony with his teachings, then shall the church herself be transformed by love, and then her touch of love shall transform the world.

When Raphael painted that glorious mural decoration which adorns the *Stanza della Signatura*, in the Vatican, and which is inappropriately named "*La Disputa*," he symbolized the high esteem in which theology was held by the people of his generation. For evidently it was the genius of theology he meant to portray when he drew the form of the fair woman holding in her hand the Gospels, and represented cherubs holding up tablets with the legend inscribed, "*Divinarum Rerum Notitia*," —knowledge of divine things,—and crowded the frescoes with figures of our Lord, the patriarchs, the apostles, and such leaders and thinkers as Ambrose, Augustine, Bernard, Aquinas, Bonaventura, Peter Lombard, Savonarola, Dante, and Fra Angelico.[2] There is, however, I fear, hardly a community now on earth, unless

[1] "Letters," Vol. I., p. 154.

[2] See Principal Cave, "Intro. to Theology and Its Literature," p. 1. A book I desire specially to recommend to students.

it be a university town, where Raphael's conception would meet with any special favor. What thrilled and moved the sixteenth century often fails to touch and stir the nineteenth. Theology ought to be an exception to this possibility. Unhappily, it is not, and yet I venture to affirm that there is no reason why it should not still be regarded, as it was in the Middle Ages, as the "Queen of Sciences." Not unworthy the consideration of those who are unwilling or unable to recognize her primacy, are the closing sentences of Tyndall's famous "Belfast Address," 1874:

> And if unsatisfied, . . the human mind, with the yearning of a pilgrim for his distant home, will turn to the Mystery from which it has emerged, seeking so to fashion it as to give unity to thought and faith; so long as this is done, not only without intolerance or bigotry of any kind, but with the enlightened recognition that ultimate fixity of conception is here unattainable, and that each succeeding age must be held free to fashion the Mystery in accordance with its needs—then, casting aside all the restrictions of materialism, I would affirm this to be a field for the noblest exercise of what, in contrast with *knowing* faculties, may be called the *creative* faculties of man.

What the professor means is simply that theology outranks other sciences. While all others call into exercise the knowing faculties, the faculties that explore and ascertain facts, theology demands, in addition to these, the creative powers of the mind; the powers that are able to synthesize and construct in that most wonderful of all domains, the spiritual and the supernatural. Its supreme dignity is not bounded by the exalted character of its labors, but is further shown, and principally, in the sublime end it is destined to serve. Theology is not an end in itself. When this is overlooked, and when

learned men theorize about sacred things with no other object than to create a system, their endeavors will awaken no special interest, and will prove only profitless and valueless. This doubtless explains why so much that has been written on this subject has been contemptuously ignored, or has been treated, even by students, with hardly disguised impatience. Theology at its best, while a system, is a system that helps mankind to "think the thought of God after him"; that brings humanity into fellowship with the Divine; that checks and suppresses disordered fancies; that obliterates superstition and develops the life of fellowship with all things true, beautiful, and good, whether in earth or heaven. Judged, therefore, by its aim, it is not too much to say that it surpasses in grandeur every other department of inquiry.

The Sistine Chapel, with its memories of Bacio Pintelli, is one of the most interesting places the stranger can visit in ancient Rome. Around the walls are masterpieces of sacred art, descriptive of the lives of Moses and of Christ, and bearing the honored names of Perugino, Botticelli, Cosimo Rosselli, Ghirlandajo, and Salviati. The ceiling was immortalized by the brush of Michael Angelo, which has blended with consummate genius, and executed with masterly effect scenes from the creative period of the world, and figures of prophets and sibyls—recalling Thomas of Celano's most singular verse:

Dies iræ, dies illa,
Solvet sæclum in favilla,
Teste David cum Sibylla.

The chapel as it is to-day is not as it has been at former

periods. Once the upper walls were hung around with cartoons by Raphael, and once, at the upper end of the room, were three pictures by Perugino. These pictures were effaced by the orders of Clement VII. to make room for Michael Angelo's great fresco of "The Last Judgment." Moreover, many of the original pictures have been retouched and cleaned, and the whole has been carefully brought to its present state of perfection; but magnificent as the chapel is, the purpose it is designed to serve excels in grandeur the wondrous splendor and harmony of its art. There worship finds its most elaborate if not its most spiritual expression, and there, on Passion Week, the Miserere its most solemn if not its most heartfelt interpretation. The chapel lends itself to this sublime adoration and to the humble confession of this faith; and in proportion as they are sincere and lowly, they transcend in value its most wonderful frescoes.

Theology, rightly apprehended, is the Sistine Chapel of the soul. It builds, it constructs, it illuminates. It reproduces the great events and gracious disclosures of holy writ, and combines and arranges them, from the transcendent acts of creation to the final catastrophe of the judgment, with the Divine Passion as the central and unifying development of history. While retaining its original outlines, like the chapel it has experienced changes, some original conceptions having given place to others, and the others being retouched by later hands and also modified by more recent additions. It likewise displays genius of the highest order and the most exalted devotion of the noblest gifts to the honor of God; but great as it is in itself, greater is it in its contem-

plated purpose. Beneath its roof, within its walls, and in the presence of its intellectual triumphs, the mind of man is illumined and stimulated, his emotions deepened and enlarged, his conscience purified and emancipated, his hopes strengthened and beautified, his entire spiritual being impelled upward toward eternal fellowship with the Supreme Spirit.

This, at least, is the end theology seeks to accomplish, and failing this, theology reveals its own immaturity and imperfection.

VIII

THE ISMS AND SCHISMS

I find no hint throughout the universe
Of good or ill, of blessing or of curse;
I find alone, necessity supreme:
The world rolls round forever like a mill.
It grinds out death and life, and good and ill;
It has no purpose, heart, or mind, or will.

—*Thompson.*

Perished is the great delusion
That I thought would ne'er have left me—perished!
Naught now is left of all these dear deceits;
Desire is dead, and not a hope remains.
Rest then forever. Thou hast throbbed enough;
Nothing here is worth such palpitations.
Our life is valueless, for it consists
Of naught but *ennui*, bitterness, and pain.
The world of clay deserveth not a sigh.
Now calm thyself: conceive thy last despair,
And wait for death, the only gift of Fate.

—*Leopardi.*

VIII

THE FAILURE OF MODERN SUBSTITUTES FOR THE ANCIENT FAITH

As the nineteenth century, from year to year, has pursued its toilsome way, it has occasionally been called on to rejoice or to mourn over the manifest decay and imminent demise of the Christian faith. The public has been assured by brilliant men that its dissolution has gone so far as to render recovery impossible; and among them some have affirmed that it is already dead, and only awaits the decency of reasonable delay before the rites of sepulture are fittingly observed. The estimate David Strauss places on the Christ of St. John, has within a decade been applied to Christianity itself, and represents to-day the sentiment of a large class of despondent inquirers: "It is a reminiscence from long forgotten days, as it were the light of a distant star, which, while the body whence it came was extinguished years ago, still meets the eye." No wonder that he concludes: "The only worship—one may lament or praise, but cannot deny it—the only worship which, from the religious ruins of the past remains to the cultured mind of to-day, is the worship of genius." Other writers have intimated that we are living in the after-glow of the Christian dispensation, a pathetic and ominous figure of speech; for the after-glow can only be followed by night, a night, I fear, without stars.

But we are exhorted not to be depressed, and not for a moment to suppose this inevitable loss irreparable. Various substitutes for the ancient Faith have been brought forward, and have been defended with extraordinary ingenuity, if not with the most edifying logic. These substitutes are not always labeled or announced as religious; but they are all set forth as equivalents, as compensations for what they supersede, and as the necessary successors of a discredited superstition. In France Positivism has been presented as the only scientific religion, and as the one destined to govern the enlightened future. In Germany Pessimism has been advocated as the only sensible philosophic exchange for an optimistic gospel. In England Agnosticism and varying forms of Naturalism have been received with the most distinguished marks of favor; while here in America we have invented Mormonism and Spiritualism, to say nothing of several additional aberrant movements, which are confidently appraised by their friends as being of higher value than any of their rivals.

The dreary attempts of the human mind during the past century to manufacture a new religion make one of the most pathetic pages in modern history. They indicate that Christianity, as it has been thought out and acted out before the world, has given rise to serious dissatisfaction. This may be admitted without sharing in the doubts of its divine origin, and without participating in the apprehensions of its speedy overthrow, which have agitated not a few persons on both sides of the Atlantic. The ancient Faith may be from heaven, even though her white garments have been somewhat besmirched by her passage through the earth; and she

may be destined to immortality even though she may seem to be weary with her pilgrimage, and though cynical critics may imagine that she "lags superfluous on the scene." But the restlessness of society, and the vague feeling that the accepted religion does not fully meet the hunger of the soul, may well be taken by its friends as a sign that indifference on their part to its ethical and intellectual quality must end disastrously. The warning, I am persuaded, has not been without effect, and I can only hope that it may, with the beginning of a new epoch, be more seriously pondered. But the endeavors to provide a substitute for Christianity when it shall finally disappear, are also expressively suggestive of the hold religion has on the entire human family. The possibility of its extinction is rarely contemplated. Its existence in some form is taken for granted and assumed as indispensable. The controversy is not with the thing itself, but with its form; not with the *kerugma*,[1] but with the dogma. If one cult is to cease, it is only that another cult may begin. When paganism gave way it was that Christianity might take its place; and if Christianity vanishes it will be only that something in advance and regarded as its superior, say, for instance, the Religion of Humanity, may succeed to its functions and mission. Making all allowance for many and distinguished exceptions, nevertheless, the race of man has never been reconciled to the idea that it has no relationships with unseen worlds, or has been finally disowned by the All-Father, or has in some home beyond "the sunset and the stars" no ultimate and eternal dwelling-place. Man as man, there-

[1] Κήρυγμα—the proclamation.

fore, "feels after God," peers into the abyss of mystery; and in his tinkering, repairing, remodeling, or attempting to make an out-and-out new faith, is disclosing his deepest longing and his determination not to be deprived and dispossessed of religion, even though an ancient historic cult may perish.

But how about the substitutes proposed? Are they more intelligible, more promising, more satisfying than the Christianity they have undertaken to dethrone? What is their value to society? Have they furnished unmistakable signs of fitness to meet the growing needs of the age, and to deal adequately with the permanent longings of the soul? Are they able to console in times of trouble, and to quicken in seasons of spiritual apathy, and to inspire in hours of weariness and trial? Are their fundamental principles more reasonable than those of the gospel? Are their motives to duty higher, their ideals nobler, their sympathies broader, and their hopes clearer and better authenticated? What have they to show for themselves? What lives have they regenerated and reinstated? What griefs have they assuaged? What reprobates have they reclaimed? What problems have they solved, and what solitary ray of light have they shed on the troubled sea of existence? If they bring a more rational and comprehensive view of the universe than is given in the Bible; if they speak with greater distinctness and assurance of a future world than the Gospels; and if they furnish a diviner conception of manhood, and a more certain method of winning the degraded and forlorn back to righteousness and peace than are embodied in the person and plan of Jesus Christ, their right to attention and, perhaps, to

supremacy, may properly be recognized. Between them and Christianity the question at issue is mainly one of comparative worth.

Is any one of them worthy to be the successor of Christianity, assuming for the moment that Christianity is to have a successor? If judged by their fruits, intellectual, spiritual, moral, social, the answer must be in the negative. Their careers thus far have been only remarkable for failures. They have been fruitful in criticisms, in hypotheses, in suppositions, and speculations, but not in those solid and definite convictions which are indispensable to religious thought and life. They have failed to illumine the understanding, to purify the conscience, to stimulate the will, to strengthen the hope of immortality, and to bring the creature into close communication with the Creator. Nay, more than this and worse than this, they have allured many minds away from a quiet anchorage to cast them loose on an ocean of unbelief where happiness and morality have both been shipwrecked. They have disturbed the head and distressed the heart, and they have darkened the horizon of life and driven many to despair. Considered in the light of what they ought to have done and could not do, and of what they have done and ought not to do, their pretentious claims must be set aside as almost sublimely arrogant. And instead of doubting from their assumptions the continual supremacy of Christianity, we should infer from their failures that the world cannot dispense with its ministry, and that everything in our power should be done to render this ministry all that it should be in grace and beauty.

How vague, misleading, and disappointing, for in-

stance, is that liberalism which has come to be regarded by some cultured people as a new and better evangel, or as the true version of the sweet evangel which our Lord taught on the hillside and in the cities of Judah. Liberality as a spirit, as an attitude of mind toward those whose views cannot be approved, is worthy of all commendation; but as a faith, as a religion, it is simply meretricious and mischievous. With Jeremy Taylor's "Liberty of Prophesying" we are in hearty accord, and believe that its principles should govern in the intercourse of Christian parties. Not only should all denominations be free from State interference in proclaiming their opinions, they should also be exempt from the indignities which bigotry may inflict. While Jeremy Taylor was in dissent he was loyal to the doctrine of his book; but when he and his came into power he was quite willing to have the Presbyterians restrained from preaching. And so to-day some of God's children are not always faithful to the charity they profess. Their inconsistency cannot take the same form as Jeremy Taylor's, for the condition of society renders that impossible; but it can be as flagrant and as cruel. It may venture to impugn motives, and to curse those whom God hath not cursed. Or it may refuse to recognize as our Lord's disciples those who are theologically unsound, and may withhold the courtesies of pulpit fellowship from clergymen whose ordination or doctrines are conceived to be by some ecclesiastics particularly unapostolic.

These judgments and discriminations are peculiarly irritating, and they are inimical to brotherly feeling and generous conduct. It is altogether disingenuous to assume that because an evangelical pastor invites a Uni-

tarian minister or a Catholic priest into his pulpit he thereby endorses or countenances the teachings represented by these officials. A man does not necessarily approve monopolies and trusts when he sends his children to colleges that have been endowed by their profits; he does not abate his antagonism to "privately owned and publicly corrupting railroads" when he is obliged to make a convenience of them for transportation; and he does not become a party to the "sweating system" when he is compelled by his poverty either to wear the clothes it has produced or to go naked. Jesus used the Jewish synagogues, though they were centers of erroneous Bible expositions; traveled the Roman roads, although they had been built by heathen rulers and in exercise of despotic power; and held friendly relations with Samaritans, though they had no dealings with his own kindred, and could scarcely sympathize with his advanced spirituality.[1] Who will charge him with indifference to the triumph of truth, or to the wrong of slavery, or to the purpose of God in ordaining Israel to be his witness, because he acted in this manner? Neither should it be assumed that one denomination becomes responsible for the doctrines of another when friendly intercourse is enjoyed, when pulpit ministrations are exchanged, and when differing sects join their endeavors on terms of perfect equality in putting down vice and crime. The most generous liberality should be fostered. It is an encouragement to independent research, and is indispensable to its successful prosecution. Moreover, where it does not exist, the genius of Christianity is obscured and its influence is curtailed.

[1] See Prof. Herron's "Between Cæsar and Jesus," Chap. II.

But while liberality is of the first importance, liberalism, a very different thing, is to be distrusted and discarded. By liberalism, I mean the agnostic type of religion that characterizes theologies as superfluous or superstitious; that sees no difference in value between one dogma and another, and thinks none at all to be of superior worth to any; that deprecates formulas and every kind of positive statement; that declares every belief to be equally sound if only held in sincerity; that feels free to use the words of Christ, not according to their grammatical sense, but according to some specious fancy as to what it was fitting in him to teach; and that, in fine, holds religion to be a fluid, sentimental, emotional something incapable of giving any rational account of its genesis, its nature, and its principles. This empty, creedless creed is generally supposed to be the peculiar offspring of liberality, and they who most loudly profess it are somehow taken at their own estimate and are extolled as "Liberals."

And yet, unhappily, they only too often prove that their liberalism must have proceeded from some other source. They can be as harsh in criticism, as intolerant of opposition, as narrow in judgment, and as supercilious in self-confidence as any of their contemporaries; and they can occasionally display as much venom as a Torquemada, and be more assured of their own infallibility in their denials than Hildebrand was in his affirmations. In the opinion of some among them, every one who cherishes real convictions, not contrary even to their own,—for they have none,—is necessarily a bigot, and every one who cultivates clear, precise, and definite thought is antagonistic to advanced thought—

it being manifestly deducible from their language that *absence* of thought on religious subjects is really equivalent to *advanced* thought. While the profession of liberalism, I fear, often deludes its enthusiastic adherent into the highly gratifying notion that he is pre-eminently liberal, there are many who sympathize with him in his conception of religion, who are as generous as the day and as free from taint of uncharitable judgment as it is possible for humanity to be. But the fact that this breadth of mind and this sweet magnanimity are not uniformly distinguishing features of liberalism, compels us by logic to infer that liberalism is not the product of liberality. It may have originated in the inability longer to credit traditional interpretations of Christianity, or in the utter disbelief in the historicity of religion, or in agnostic philosophic speculations, but not necessarily in liberality. Let us not confuse things that differ, or deceive ourselves. There has never lived a more pronounced positivist in doctrine than St. Paul, and none who ever penned a sublimer tribute to charity than he.[1] Men may be dogmatic in their beliefs and liberal in their spirit; and they may be liberal in their beliefs and dogmatic in their spirit. No one is, therefore, warranted in assuming that his negations and denials are born of a larger and more tolerant thought than the opinions and affirmations of his neighbor. Liberality may or may not have been in his heart when he shaped his religious views; but the party shibboleth which he pronounces so glibly conveys no assurance on this point.

Liberalism is the child of doubt, not of charity; it is

[1] 1 Cor. 13, and compare with Rom. 5, 6.

the offspring of despair, not of hope. It is a death, not a resurrection. And as it is in its sources, so is it in its effects. Whence it proceeds thither does it return; from doubt to doubt, from death to death. To the state of mind it engenders prayer is not supplication; and to it there is no redemption, no salvation, no real resurrection of Christ, and no deep incentive to deep spirituality or to profound religious feeling. An illustration of what it is at its best and highest is furnished in the writings of Matthew Arnold.[1] This author sets forth an ethical idealism, similar to the idealism of Fichte, as a substitute for the ancient faith. He excludes belief in supernatural beings and miraculous deeds, and practically rejects everything from the content of Christianity except its ethics. Its history by his method becomes poetry, and its seemingly sober doctrine only rhetorical rapture. His fundamental thought is that religion has to do with conduct; that it is ethical; and yet not as a series of cold, abstract regulations, but as "heightened, enkindled, lit up by feeling." In other words, according to his concise formula: "It is morality touched by emotion." The basis of this system is not "the intelligent Governor of the universe," as defined by theology, but "the Eternal, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." He concedes that the conversion of this Power by devout imagination into a person can do no harm, provided we treat this personification as a mere figure of speech. For his conception he pleads that it is the only one verifiable by experience, and that all the others are the products of metaphysics. But this contention

[1] "Literature and Dogma," and "God and the Bible."

cannot be made good, for if there is anything transparently clear it is that this "Eternal Power not ourselves," is at the best only a philosophical abstraction. He himself proves this by the contradictory ways in which he describes it; speaking of it at one time as a real, efficient power for which we feel deep reverence, and at another as a kind of law, such as the law of gravitation or the law of spiritual beauty. His whole theory is metaphysical from start to finish. It does not present an idea that has been verified by experience, neither does it present one that is easier of comprehension than that of the All-Father, nor one that is better fitted to develop the "emotion" indispensable to religious conduct.

Let us concede that "ethics" constitute the real aim and expression of the religious life, yet that does not explain how this "Power not ourselves makes for righteousness." What intelligible connection is there between the two? If the "Power" makes for righteousness, as the law of gravitation makes for physical attraction, then we ought necessarily to be righteous; and if it only does so as a Person influencing persons, then, however it is named, there is no perceptible difference between it and the Deity of evangelical theology. For the sake of the "emotion" which, according to Mr. Arnold, must kindle the morality, there ought to be some adequate source. Such a source is not furnished by colorless and abstruse conceptions that may mean different things to different minds. These never have had and never can have potency enough to arrest the wrong-doer in his evil course, and awaken conscience from its lethargic slumber. What effect would this

"Power, not ourselves," have on a company of criminals, or of gamblers, or of outcasts, or even of reputable transgressors, if an effort were being made to reform their lives? The question hardly needs an answer. No sane practical worker would for a moment rely on this metaphysical notion to move the guilty to repentance, or to bring back the wanderer to the paths of duty. And that which is inadequate to accomplish what it undertakes to do, demonstrates scientifically that it has no claim to serious and respectful attention.

But to this must be added that Mr. Arnold's definition of religion is as unsatisfactory as his conception of its source. While religion comprehends morality, it means more than morality. This has been very conclusively shown by Friedrich Paulsen, professor of philosophy in the University of Berlin. In an important and exhaustive work just issued,[1] he maintains that Christianity is not mere morality, and contrasts its supreme ideal with that of the Greeks: "The Greeks regarded the perfect development of the natural powers of man as the great aim of life. Christianity, on the other hand, clearly and consciously sets up the opposite as the goal of life; the death of the material, and the resurrection of a new, supernatural man." The professor sees that the modern world is seeking to include the two ideals in a great synthesis. As I read the New Testament I find both comprehended in the teachings of our Lord. Unquestionably the Master said to Nicodemus: "Ye must be born again," and in the interview generalized his instructions so as to make them applicable to humanity without exception. Moreover, throughout his min-

[1] "A System of Ethics."

istry we obtain a revelation of what religion is, irreconcilable with the narrow definition of liberalism. It is spiritual life, and life more abundant; it is spiritual worship; it is spiritual fellowship and spiritual service. It is an experience of eternal realities; it is the realization of supernatural and eternal relationships.

The only way by which these conclusions can be avoided is by minimizing the significance of our Lord's words, a practice pursued by such writers as Arnold, and followed by some theologians like Wendt. It will surely be admitted that Jesus is an authority, the chief authority, on this subject, and that what he says is entitled to consideration. The disposition, therefore, to ignore his testimony, or to alter it to suit the convenience of particular theories, is highly reprehensible. What Doctor Stalker in his last book has very vigorously expressed in regard to a special instance of this unwarranted method, may be accepted as a fair criticism of all by whom it has been adopted. He writes:

> Wendt takes each saying of Christ by itself, and having laboriously shown the very least it can possibly have meant, then assumes this to have been the original meaning. But it is often not the natural meaning; and one gets tired of this continual shallowing of everything that Jesus said. The truth is, if Jesus meant no more than Wendt makes him say, he was the most paradoxical and hyperbolical teacher that has ever appeared, and he alienated his hearers by mystifications, when a few words of common sense, such as Wendt now speaks for him, would have cleared away all difficulties and conciliated the minds of men.[1]

As liberalism, if it appeals to Christ at all, has to do so in the very way so justly condemned by Stalker, it

[1] "The Christology of Jesus."

awakens distrust in its principles. As, however, it seems to evade the real force of our Lord's teachings, and as it fails to furnish a satisfactory conception of religion, and provides no adequate means for the realization of its conception, meagre as it is, liberalism can never serve as a substitute for the ancient faith.

Agnosticism is another of these proposed substitutes which, although once exceedingly popular, and still favorably entertained by many cultured persons, can never hope to displace the religion of Christ. Nevertheless, its prominence among recent speculations, and the undeniable charm which it possesses for a certain type of mind, warrant a brief inquiry into its teachings and a candid estimate of their worth. There is no doubt that agnosticism grew out of the materialism which was so widespread during the first half of the nineteenth century. It has been described by a recent writer as materialism expressing itself in the region of intellect.[1] The philosophic vagaries of Feuerbach throw some light on its origin. This celebrated man held that religion is only an idealistic fiction, and that the gods are *Wunschwesen, i. e.*, the desires of the heart made objectively real through the imagination. Christ, miracles, heaven, are purely subjective fancies and wishes without actual and corresponding reality. He maintained that only what is cognizable by the senses is real, and what we call the spiritual is only the effect of the sensible. Therefore, while he had admired the Hegelian school for a time, in these sentiments he reveals his complete conversion to materialism. His doctrine is summed up in his saying: "Man *is* what he

[1] "*Sursum Corda.*"

eats." From this point of view religion is merely an illusion, a self-deception, an echo of man's own voice, concerning which he can know nothing, and about which there is nothing to know. In its main features it agrees with what Pliny said a class of teachers taught in his day, "that all religion is the offspring of necessity, weakness, and fear," adding, "What God is, if in truth he be anything distinct from the world, it is beyond the compass of man's understanding to know."

Only a few years ago this materialistic philosophy was seemingly triumphant, and pronounced its necessary negations in the tones of greatest assurance. Said one writer: "The government of the world must not be considered as determined by an extra-mundane intelligence, but by one immanent in the cosmical forces and their relations." Another wrote: "Science has gradually taken all the positions of the childish belief of the peoples, it has snatched thunder and lightning from the hands of the gods. The stupendous powers of the Titans of the olden times have been grasped by the fingers of men." The dire consequences of this practical atheism, as they appeared in practical life, when such opinions as these were somewhat common in literature, are graphically described by Percy Greg. He says:

Go into a London club, listen to the talk of men of the world on moral questions, and see how little of earnest faith in any moral law is left among them. . . Now-a-days even conservative society rather patronizes religion than believes in it, and a similar skepticism prevails on points of morality. A man may to-day affirm that marriage is an absurdity, may challenge the first principles of social order, might have defended murder till the assassinations committed by Land Leagues and Nihilists fright-

ened society into a passion on that subject, may argue against any of the ten commandments, and will be answered on equal terms.[1]

Agnosticism, therefore, at this stage of its history was a species of nescience begotten of materialism and tending toward ethical confusion. But a change has taken place. Few scientific leaders in our day would care to affirm, with Tyndall, that matter contains "the promise and potency" of all life; and fewer still would undertake, with Büchner, to manufacture a universe out of "matter and force." Professor Huxley, toward the end of his career, held materialism to be a "grave, philosophic error," and declared that if he were compelled to choose between materialism and idealism he would choose the latter. But though the ground beneath it has been shifting, agnosticism, while it has declined, has not finally disappeared. The new idealism, however, in my opinion, is fatal to its prolonged existence. Mr. Herbert Spencer a generation ago contended that idealism, were it proven, would render evolution inconceivable. Into the merit of this issue I shall not enter; but whether his inference is warranted or not, it is certain that if idealism is true, agnosticism is false. The former always carries with it and implies the reality of the Divine existence. I am not restricting this consciousness to the idealist; but he would be a contradiction were he devoid of its faithful witness. The noblest thinkers of our race, Socrates, Plato, Kant, Berkeley, Descartes, Fichte, Cousin, Pascal, Wordsworth, Browning, and others, however their philosophies may vary, agree in tracing to something native to man his seem-

[1] "Without God."

ingly instinctive belief in the Supreme Being. On this point Dean Mansel writes in these terms:

> Those who lay exclusive stress on the proof of the existence of God from the marks of design in the world, or from the necessity of supposing a first cause for all phenomena, overlook the fact that man learns to pray before he learns to reason; that he feels within him the consciousness of a Supreme Being and the instinct of worship, before he can argue from effects to causes, or estimate the traces of wisdom and benevolence scattered throughout the creation.[1]

And Huxley himself admitted the trustworthiness of consciousness, and even went so far as to declare that it was the ultimate certainty, and the existence of matter only "a highly probable hypothesis."[2] It is not my business to reconcile this statement with others made by the eminent scientist. His admission must be taken as a tribute to the veraciousness of consciousness, and, consequently, as confirming Dean Mansel's position. And if consciousness is the "ultimate certainty," and materialism is being superseded by idealism, then, unless man develops into the most irrational of creatures, he will not keep on denying in his philosophic creed what is affirmed by his spiritual nature. So long as materialism maintained its supremacy, agnosticism was logical and inevitable; but now that it is being rapidly discredited this "creed of nothingness" necessarily finds it more and more difficult to preserve its hold on the human mind.

But though they are thus genetically related and their destiny closely interwoven, Professor Huxley, in his definition of agnosticism, does not connect it with any

[1] "Limits of Religious Thought." [2] "Science and Morals: IX."

philosophic system whatever. This is his explanation of its meaning:

> Agnosticism is of the essence of science, whether ancient or modern. It simply means that a man shall not say he knows or believes that which he has no scientific grounds for professing to know or believe. . . Agnosticism says that we know nothing of what may be beyond phenomena.

Hence it was that Darwin represented his own religious position in its final stage in this manner: "The mystery of the beginning of all things is insoluble by us; and I, for one, must be content to remain an agnostic." It is not, therefore, a method of inquiry, or a passing phase of mental experience, neither is it the *thätige skepsis* of Goethe, which aims at conquering itself; but rather a fixed state of intellectual insolvency and of irremediable ignorance. Were it only a recrudescence of the critical skeptical spirit, which St. Simon set forth as constantly alternating with the spirit of conviction and faith in the world's history, it would not be so unutterably blank and hopeless. These two have appeared and reappeared from the beginning, dividing the attention of mankind. At one time the first revealed itself in the Greek sophists whose destructive analysis was counteracted by the moral synthesis of Socrates; then the same incredulity set the augurs laughing over their sacrifices at Rome, but was effectually arrested by the moral earnestness of Christianity. Again the first spirit incarnated itself in Hume and Gibbon, while the second once more revived in the fiery devotion of Methodism.

If agnosticism represented only a similar return of doubt, the temporary ebbing of faith's floods, its presence

among us would occasion neither excessive surprise nor inconsolable sadness. We would simply wait for the reaction, and be at peace. But it means much more than this. It denotes a permanent and impassable barrier, a natural and insuperable impediment, which the mind cannot traverse in search of light, and through which and over which the light cannot find entrance into the mind. By it a circle is drawn within whose narrow boundaries knowledge is said to be attainable, while beyond all is—what? Speculations, visions, dreams, uncertainties—anything but knowledge. But by the authority of what new infallibility has any man the right to say that, while through physical phenomena we may rise to the conception of law, we have no reason to rely on spiritual phenomena when they lead us upward to God? The reality of matter is more in dispute to-day than the reality of spirit,[1] and yet we are urged to rely exclusively on what we imagine is disclosed by the former. I repeat "imagine," for if the operations of the mind by which all things, physical as well as spiritual, are determined, cannot be depended on, how dare we trust its interpretations of the material? Thomas Bailey Saunders has developed this idea very successfully and has clearly shown that the fundamental principle of agnosticism "applied to the foundations of science would make science impossible." That is, it would consign all that we think we know of the natural world to the same region of imagination in which, according to the agnostic, dwell all of our religious ideals, hopes, and fears.

There is no room in such a system for anything like

[1] See "Naturalism and Agnosticism," Ward.

religion. The hush, the awe, which Herbert Spencer assumes to be felt by humanity in the presence of the inscrutable mystery of existence, may, by a kind of poetic license, be called the worship of the Unknowable; but after all, it is not very discernible, the average man not being given to awe, and fails entirely to develop those feelings of love and faith, with the sense of personal fellowship, inseparable from real worship. Agnosticism would revive the worship of the ignorant savage, and seemingly cannot conceive of anything different from his trembling wonder, unless it be the untrembling wonder and amazement of cultured and civilized man. But as it cannot make for true devoutness, neither can it advance the interests of morality. In making this statement I have no intention to reflect on the motives or character of its supporters, for I know, as Mr. Gladstone said of Mill, the agnostic may be "the saint of rationalism." I have in view solely the logical bearing of the theory under examination. Agnosticism has been likened to Mephistopheles when he says to Faust: "I am the spirit that denies." It denies the divine origin of the moral law; it denies that God has revealed to man the way of duty; and it denies to conscience the very qualities which are necessary to its authority as a rule of conduct. Mr. Saunders writes:

> We are all aware that Kant, while he showed that the existence of God, the freedom of the will, and immortality, were ideas beyond the reach of pure reason, nevertheless recognized that practical reason afforded the assurance of their truth. He found himself compelled to accept them as postulates necessary to the moral consciousness, and involved in the fundamental and indemon-

strable principle of a categorical imperative, or the command so to act as that our action may be fit for law universal.[1]

Agnosticism is irreconcilable with this imperative; and yet this imperative is indispensable to ethical supremacy in human life.

We must, therefore, abandon the very foundations of duty or surrender agnosticism. The chasm that divides them is wide and impassable. No airy suspension bridge of metaphysical speculation can join them together. The thought of God explains the conscience, and the existence of conscience demands and necessitates the existence of God. If agnosticism practically destroys the conscience, on the other hand, the admission that conscience *is*, destroys agnosticism. On this point Doctor Newman has written in these terms:

> If we feel responsibility, are ashamed, are frightened, at transgressing the voice of conscience, this implies that there is One to whom we are responsible, before whom we are ashamed, whose claims upon us we fear. . . If the cause of these emotions does not belong to this visible world, the object to which man's perception is directed must be supernatural and divine; and thus the phenomena of conscience, as a dictate, avail to impress the imagination with the picture of a Supreme Governor, a Judge, holy, just, powerful, all-seeing, retributive.

At the bar of conscience reason must reject agnosticism, and in this decisive manner dispose of its ambitious desire to usurp the place and power of the ancient faith.

Through the labors and writings of Auguste Comte (born in 1797), there has appeared another claimant to

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[1] "Quest of Faith," p. 29.

the throne and honors of Christianity as the religion of mankind. I refer to positivism, which has sufficient merit to arouse the attention of thinkers like George Lewes, John Stuart Mill, Edward Caird, Cotter Morrison, and Professor Clifford, among whom two at least became its disciples. The author of this would-be cult was a man of undoubted genius, whose contributions to intellectual progress were neither few nor slight. Herbert Spencer, who differed radically from him, nevertheless pays this tribute to his achievements in one special department :

> True or untrue, his system as a whole has doubtless produced important and salutary revolutions of thought in many minds, and will doubtless do so in many more. . . The presentation of scientific knowledge and method as a whole, whether rightly or wrongly co-ordinated, cannot have failed greatly to widen the conception of most of his readers. And he has done special service by familiarizing men with the idea of a social science based on other sciences.

It is, therefore, with no purpose of disparaging his great abilities that we venture to bring his religious theories to the test of reason and experience. They seem in some degree to have been influenced by the potent sway of a woman's love. He was devoted to this woman and she in her turn was devoted to him. His life was transformed by the charm of her mind and heart. "He learned to appreciate the abiding and universal influence of the affections. He gained a new glimpse into man's destiny. He aspired to become the founder of a new religion, the 'Religion of Humanity.'" No wonder, then, that having been taught in the school of a woman's sacred passion and self-immolation, he

should have undertaken his task "with the full assurance that happiness, like duty, is to be found only in the more perfect surrender of self to the great Being, in whom the universal order is transfigured, and the wise will strive ever to devote their lives more truly to its service. Man's prudence and energy, with all their resources, only bring out more fully man's dependence, so that they force him to seek outside of himself the sole foundations by which he can give stability to his life." As far as Comte's religious system breathes this spirit there is little room for criticism. It is essentially the spirit of Christianity, and in this respect, as there is no radical difference, so there is no superiority of the younger over the elder cult. But when he departs from this devout mood, and when he identifies the "great Being" with humanity as a whole, and when he dismisses theology as only a metaphysical stage in the progress of mankind, we are compelled to part from him. Not all of his mystical reveries in Catholic churches, nor his genuine attachment to "The Divine Comedy" and the "Imitation of Christ," can suffice to obscure the dangerous defects of a system which ignores the supernatural, and proclaims the "constancies of succession and co-existence" as supplying the sum-total of human knowledge.

Edward Caird regards positivism as synonymous with the movement commonly called the "Enlightenment," or *Aufklärung*, a term employed by Kant, and which he uses to denote "the advance of man beyond the state of voluntary immaturity." Of its significance Professor Caird writes as follows: "It is called *Aufklärung*, or 'Enlightenment,' because it is opposed to every kind of belief in the spiritual or divine which identifies

it with the miraculous, the arbitrary, the lawless, or the unintelligible, because, so to speak, it carries its candle into every chamber of the house, and insists on leaving no dark corner unvisited in which ghosts might be supposed to lurk." He shows how this movement "has developed a consciousness of law and order in the world," but has, at the same time, narrowed "man's intellectual horizon" "in a way which is fatal to religion." "For the enlightenment not only removed spiritual reality from a sphere to which it did not properly belong, or divested it of a sensuous vesture which hid its true nature; it also led to the denial that there is in human experience any room for spiritual reality at all, except as an illusion of the infancy of the individual or the race."[1] Enough has already been said in these lectures to discredit this fundamental assumption. Guizot, Carlyle, Caird, and others, have shown that the mechanical and external view of the world to which positivism is pledged cannot be accepted as a perfect view, and cannot, therefore, be harmonized with the essential nature of religion. It is curious to observe how Comte himself recognizes this fact, and how, while founding his system on it, he seeks to escape from its consequences by inventing a cult destitute of everything specifically religious except the name.

He contends that human thought has passed through three stages: "The theological stage of primitive times, the metaphysical stage in the Middle Ages, the positive or scientific of modern times." In this way he disposes of religion in the sense in which the term has been understood for generations, by making it but a step in the

[1] "Evolution of Religion," Vol. I., Lectures XI., XII.

history of progress, permanently left behind in the further ascent. But this theory is untenable. As Sabatier says :

> The three stages are not successive but simultaneous ; they do not correspond to three periods of history, but to three permanent needs of the human soul. You find them combined in various degrees in antiquity, in Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle ; in modern times in Descartes, Pascal, Leibnitz, Kant, Claude Bernard, and Pasteur. The more science progresses and becomes conscious of its true method and of its limits, the more does it become distinguished from philosophy and religion.

In all literature I do not recall anything more fanciful and visionary than Comte's three stages ; and there are not lacking reasons for supposing that he was not altogether satisfied with them himself. For after having represented religion as outgrown and superseded, and having predicted the extinction of the disposition to religion in the soul, he ends his career by providing a substitute for what he had repudiated, and for which, according to his scheme, no necessity existed. In this way he deprives his original postulate of its force, and himself discredits his theory of the three stages.

And what a wonderful contrivance his new religion is, clumsily imitating the hierarchical order and sacerdotalism of Roman Catholicism. There is a positivist church, with its saints, relics, catechism, and observances, just like an ecclesiastical organization with its rites and rituals. And of the faith to which these externals are to give form, he himself writes in the *"Politique Positive"* :

> To constitute any true religious state there must be a concurrence of two primary elements, the one objective and intellectual,

the other subjective and moral. . . It is requisite that our minds should conceive a power without us, so superior to ourselves as to command the complete submission of our entire life. . . To make submission complete, affection must unite with respect, and this combination of feelings is effected spontaneously by the sense of gratitude. The profound respect awakened by the supreme power awakens also a mutual sentiment of benevolence in all who join in devotion to the same object. The analysis which I finally choose as the best to express the true series of parts is that which makes religion consist of three essential elements : doctrine, worship, and government.[1]

There is not much, if anything, to object to in this statement, and it might be taken as the prelude to an avowal of orthodoxy. But, alas! the sequel does not carry out the promise. What follows comes to us as a kind of anti-climax, as a precipitous descent from the sublime to a stage even below the commonplace. This "power without us, so superior to ourselves," turns out, after all this stately diction, to be merely collective humanity, "the real author of the benefits for which thanks were formerly given to God," "the only one we can know, and therefore the only one we can worship." Positivism, therefore, is practically atheism and idolatry combined. It says, in Comte's own speech: "To minds early familiarized with true philosophical astronomy, the heavens declare no other glory than that of Kepler and Newton, and of all those who have aided in establishing her laws." Thus it robs the Creator of his glory and ascribes it to the creature. And

Humanity is to be worshiped with the ardor of inward devotion, and, if it may be, with the appropriate splendor of a visible ritual. Man himself is the rightful, the adequate object of his love, of his

[1] Matheson, "The Gospel and Modern Substitutes," p. 144.

aspirations, of his hopes, of his enthusiasms. Man in his collective capacity, the organism "humanity," is to be worshiped by each individual man. And from this new cultus, we are told there is to flow forth a morality, which, in its spirit and its objects, shall be enthusiastically human, against which, as we are further assured, the inferior ethics of Christendom, weighted with the dogmatic teaching of the creeds, will struggle in vain for supremacy in the Europe of the future.[1]

Canon Liddon, with illuminating directness, inquires whether the humanity to be worshiped is humanity in the abstract or humanity in the concrete? If the former, then, after all the parade about science, a metaphysical conception is made the foundation of the new creed, and it is very questionable whether such abstractions have ever succeeded in developing practical righteousness; and if the latter, then, as it must include the Neros, the Alvas, the Dominics, the Lucretia Borgias, and the entire order of murderers, adulterers, prisoners, misers, swindlers, traitors, drunkards, bullies, pimps, and bawds, as well as the goodly company of saints and sages, the worship proposed is simply an absurdity and an impossibility. But Naville, after subjecting the entire scheme to a searching test, goes further than this, and exposes its utter worthlessness as a moral force. He thus analyzes its pretensions as an ethical cult, and thus criticises them:

Mankind is the summit of the universe—there is nothing higher. Mankind is God, if we allow that this sacred name may be used in a new sense. How then can mankind be judged? In virtue of what law, when there is no law? In the name of what right, when there is no right? Condemnation is but personal prejudice, the view of a narrow mind. God is not to be judged, he is to be

[1] Liddon's "University Sermons," p. 60.

described ; his acts are to be recognized, they are all to be equally honored. The deification of the human race is the justification of all its acts, and involves as its direct result the annihilation of all morality.[1]

Is it surprising then, in view of the breakdown of positivism, that Guizot should have expressed himself as he does in his works concerning Comte and his teachings :

At any other period his doctrine would have been regarded as folly, but having been born in our times, he has been more fortunate ; his fundamental principle, and the coincidence of his first ideas with the method and tendency of the physical sciences, which are the favorite pursuit of the age, have given him more weight and influence than he actually deserved.[2]

And this verdict has been confirmed by later students. Positivism to-day is rather a declining cult than one advancing in the world's confidence and esteem. It never had any solid ground on which to build its hopes, and even the ground it had has turned out to be the most treacherous quicksand. Like other modern rivals to the Christian Faith, it is now sinking below the horizon, a pronounced and ignominious failure.

The true corrective of positivism is pessimism, whose famous advocate and expounder, Schopenhauer, born in 1788, seems to have been called to demonstrate the impossibility of such a wretched, miserable, and contemptible thing as humanity becoming an object of worship. But the philosopher of woe and melancholy, while antagonizing positivism, has no remedy to propose nor any substitute to offer. His entire thought is charged

[1] "*Le Père Céleste.*" [2] "*Méditations sur la Religion Chrétienne.*"

with the elements of agony and despair. He sees no possibility for hope of any kind. He says: "The history of every life is a history of suffering, for the course of life is generally but a series of greater or lesser misfortunes," to which he adds: "The more intelligent the man is, the more completely does he attain the full quantum of misery; he in whom genius lives suffers most of all." Moreover, he continues: "Driven by fear of *ennui*, men and women rush into society, thinking to gain a fleeting pleasure by escaping from themselves. But in vain; their inseparable foe renews his torments only too surely." Such language reminds me of what I have read of a Buddhist monastery in the far East, and of the fate which often overtakes its inhabitants. The building is reared on the edge of a great cliff, and frequently beneath it the clouds gather in various and fantastic forms. There are seasons when these clouds become saturated with light, and when they shine in all the splendor of gold, purple, and violet. When this magnificent transfiguration occurs, devotees in the monastery call it "the glory of Buddha," and frenzied by religious delirium they sometimes cast themselves into this palpitating mass of color and sunshine, only to be dashed to death on the hidden rocks beneath, victims for the vulture and the jackal. So, if Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann are to be credited, we are constantly being befooled by our own desires. Illusions enchant us, gilded deceptions fascinate; and we imagine that in this pleasure and that delight surcease from sorrow must be found, and plunging in discover, when too late, that the reality only maims and crushes us the more.

Of such a deadly, dreary, and desperate philosophy religion never could be born. Religion is essentially optimistic. When it has no good tidings to proclaim, no hope to inspire, it lacks in what is indispensable to its character. Were it to avow the teachings of pessimism, whether of the Schopenhauer school or of the Max Nordau type, it would fail to kindle the spirit of worship, and would lead only to such desperation as Shelley voices in his tragical "Prometheus":

> But thou, who art the God and Lord: oh thou
> Who fillest with thy soul this world of woe,
> To whom all things of earth and heaven do bow
> In fear and worship: all-prevailing foe!
> I curse thee! Let a sufferer's curse
> Clasp thee, his torturer, like remorse!
> Till thine Infinity shall be
> A robe of envenomed agony;
> And thine Omnipotence a crown of pain;
> To cling like burning gold round thy dissolving brain.

We have no reason, therefore, to consider pessimism as the rival of Christianity, as the Macbeth plotting to take its throne, but rather as the Frankenstein of graveyards and dissecting-rooms, insulting the Creator, destructive alike of religion and the religious spirit. But as its efforts have proved unavailing, and as in the nature of things they must continue to fail, and as they have only demonstrated by their disclosures of human anguish the need that exists for the tender offices of Christianity, we may dismiss pessimism without further ceremony, and direct our attention to certain modern substitutes which have taken special, though not exclusive, hold on the American world.

Among these, Spiritualism, or Spiritism as it ought to be named, occupies a very prominent place. It was in 1849 that the "Fox girls," through the notorious "Rochester rappings," invited public attention to what may be termed psychic phenomena. The young women claimed that these rappings were signs from the dead, and conveyed communications from the spirit land. This explanation naturally excited inquiry, led to many experiments, with the result that not a few people adopted the views of the sisters. Here we have the beginnings of Spiritism in the United States. The craze spread rapidly. Mediums multiplied. To serve as connecting links between the inhabitants of two worlds became a regular calling. Believers were organized into "seances," "circles," "associations," and in 1859 it was claimed that one million five hundred thousand persons had embraced the new mysteries as undeniable verities. It was hinted that four million more were partly convinced, and were only restrained by certain prejudices from going farther. About the year 1860 it seemed as if our country were to become "the happy hunting grounds" of restless ghosts, and our citizens very generally to become absorbed in occult pursuits. Then came a pause, then a decline, and a late census gives the entire membership of Spiritual associations as forty-five thousand and thirty.[1] This figure, however, must not be taken too literally. There are still multitudes who are more or less closely allied with this movement, though I do not think the class so numerous as a writer in the "Spectator" intimates it is in the "Modern Athens," where "in more than one street,"

[1] Bacon: "History of American Christianity," p. 338.

he says, "the names of professional spirit mediums, healing mediums, alchemists, palmists, and allied callings, are to be found on at least every other door-plate."[1] On the whole, I should say that confidence in Spiritism as a form of supernaturalism has declined, though as an incentive to psychical research it has gained in influence.

Such investigations were originally started in Paris in 1785, through the wonders wrought by Mesmer, who was an adept in a special form of magnetism. Lavoisier, Franklin, and other eminent scientists, shared in this work; but they did not approach it from the standpoint of the more recent Spiritism. Since their day commissions have been appointed in many countries to study the phenomena that border on the marvelous. And, according to Alfred Wallace, it is not necessary to deny their reality in undertaking to explain them. He bears this testimony on the subject:

> One after another facts, long denied as delusions or exaggerations, have been admitted to be realities. The stigmata, which at different times have occurred in Catholic countries, are no longer sneered at as priestly impostures. Thought-transference, automatic-writing, trance-speaking, and clairvoyance, have all been demonstrated in the presence of living observers of undoubted ability and knowledge, as they were demonstrated to the observers of the early part of the century and carefully recorded by them. The still more extraordinary phenomena, veridical hallucinations, warnings, detailed predictions of future events, phantoms, voices or knockings, visible or audible to numerous individuals, still occur among us as they have occurred in all ages.[2]

Spiritism has done much in our time to stimulate

[1] "Spectator," July 1, 1899. [2] "The Wonderful Century," p. 211.

these inquiries, not, perhaps, intentionally, but as opening up the entire subject in such a way as to challenge scrutiny. The manifestations it deals with are not novelties. They were not unknown to the ancients. Traces of them are found in the Old and New Testaments, in the Egyptian book of the dead, and in the literature and traditions of the Greeks and Romans. But the curious circumstance that these manifestations revived in the most modern of nations, and in an age exceptionally scientific, naturally invested them with extraordinary significance, and as naturally intensified the desire thoroughly to explore their origin and nature. Thus they lent themselves to a renewed endeavor, similar to the efforts of learned commissions a century ago, for the determination of the grave questions that are always suggested by the reappearance of occult phenomena. To this extent, therefore, they have not proved an unmixed evil; and had Spiritualism been content to promote simply psychical research there would be little occasion to refer to it in these lectures.

But it has not shown itself satisfied with this *rôle*. It has gone farther, and has announced itself as a new religious dispensation, as the successor of the Christian dispensation, just as the latter was the successor of the Mosaic. Its representatives declare that under this latest economy the spirits of the departed are the ordinary ministers between God and man, and that it is their vocation to disclose to him a new revelation and a new system of morals. This, indeed, is a very radical departure from the teachings of the New Testament. There we find the work of saving men—and whatever that may involve—entrusted to human instrumentalities

and the statement made by St. Paul that we have "the heavenly treasure in earthen vessels." The church does not feel itself bound to affirm or deny the possible influence on the living of those who are dead. The prayers that some among her members offer to the saints in heaven would seem to indicate the existence of a widespread impression that death has not rigidly excluded them from interference with the affairs of earth. But even were this admitted, and could it be shown that these agencies are identical with the "ministering spirits" described by St. Paul, it would not follow that prayers ought to be addressed to them, or that their aid should be sought through the necromancy of modern mediums; and still less would it follow that they were commissioned to set aside the old revelation and give to mankind a new faith and a new ethical code. The conclusions are too great, weighty, and varied for the premises.

Let it be conceded that a thousand phantoms have "table-rapped" themselves into recognition; at the best that would only prove their continued existence, and would not by any conceivable necessity establish the assumption that they were appointed to supersede Christianity, and inaugurate another dispensation as a substitute. I humbly submit, that so tremendous a corollary could only be rendered plausible by something actually being done along the lines indicated. But nothing has been done. From the countless alleged communications from the invisible world received since 1849, no ray of light has been thrown on the vexed problems which have for ages troubled mankind. We know no more of God, of the soul, of redemption, of

destiny than we did before. There has been much chattering on the part of garrulous phantoms, and the vanity of thousands on the earth has been gratified by the attentions bestowed on them by the shades of Shakespeare, Goethe, Wordsworth, Byron, Condorcet, and other eminent personages, who, probably, had they been alive would never have been drawn to converse with those ladies and gentlemen who now represent themselves as the recipients of their confidences. But from all this imaginary correspondence the world has derived no nobler beliefs and no purer morals than are contained in the gospel of God's Son. Spiritism, whatever else it does, has never illuminated. There is no light in it. As a religion it is a religion without a message.

What! it will be asked, has it not demonstrated the immortality of the soul? No. But even if it had, that would not be a revelation. It would only be the corroboration of a revelation, as Christianity has taught it from the beginning. Suppose that a man who died fifty years ago returns and raps on a table; that only proves that he now exists, not that he will persist eternally to exist. Because a person lives and is in good health to-day, that does not establish beyond doubt that he will be alive and in good health to-morrow. To prove anything by experience, the experience must be completed. But the experience of an endless existence can never be finished, and, therefore, it can never be proven by experience. Hence immortality can never be verified and authenticated in any other way than by the inner testimony of the soul and the direct assurance given by God. This double authentication we have, independent

of everything that Spiritism has either said or done. Savage and semi-barbarous tribes have believed in the posthumous existence and influence of the dead, without entertaining clear and definite convictions regarding their immortality. And their general oblivion to any necessary connection between posthumous existence and everlasting existence may be taken as a sign that even now we are not warranted in arguing confidently from the one to the other.

On the subject of ethics it is not easy to write with perfect candor and freedom. But it may with safety be said, that Spiritism has added nothing to our better understanding or to our truer exemplification of morality. As a religion it has pledged itself to give the world a new moral code. Thus far it has done nothing of the kind; and society is still burdened with the implied condition and inadequacies of the "Ten Commandments" and the "Sermon on the Mount." This delay is ominous of ultimate failure, particularly as there are not lacking indications that Spiritism as a system rather tends to practices and conduct subversive of even ordinary ideas of right than to their enlargement and advancement. A recent writer[1] quotes William Howitt as saying years ago: "If anything can kill it, it will be the follies and contemptible meanness of the Spiritualists themselves." And Dr. Bacon, summing up the findings of the famous Seybert Commission, appointed by the University of Pennsylvania, concludes:

> Every case of alleged communication from the world of departed spirits that was investigated . . . was discovered and

[1] Miss X., "Essays in Psychical Research."

demonstrated to be a fraud. The evidence is strong that the organized system of spiritualism in America, with its Associations and lyceums and annual camp-meetings, and its itinerancy of mediums and trance speakers, is a system of mere imposture.[1]

That many simple-minded and honest people have been entrapped by this delusion, and that many under the excitement of supposed communications with the invisible have been unintentionally blind to the moral obliquity involved in certain courses adopted to convince the skeptical, must be conceded. We have no desire to be classed with those who are undiscriminating in their judgments; particularly as the history of mankind proves how frequently worthy people, who usually act worthily, have been betrayed into unworthy schemes and deeds by what they regarded as the emergencies of their religion, the preservation of whose credibility they have counted as of infinitely more moment than unswerving devotion to the principles of commonplace integrity. But with this concession, it must still be held that the frequent exposures of fraud, the unsavory reports from a certain camp-meeting,—which shall be nameless,—and the singular doings of masculine short-haired women and feminine long-haired men, and the constant preference for darkness, suggest that spiritism as a system is not favorable to morality, and is hardly likely to elaborate a code of conduct superior to the ethics that has been proclaimed for two thousand years by Christianity. And failing to provide a better revelation and purer laws, what other conclusion is possible than that spiritism, instead of superseding the ancient faith, is rather doomed to wasting and decay.

[1] "History of American Christianity," p. 338.

Within the last twenty-five years the world has witnessed another religious departure, which, if not put forward as a substitute for Christianity, at least proposes such a revolution in our apprehension of its teachings and its divine vocation as would make it very different from what it is at present, or ever has been. This latest claimant to divine honors is called "Christian Science"; its founder is Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, and its text-book and compendium of doctrine and practice is named "Science and Health." It is estimated that upward of three hundred thousand persons in this country and in Canada have embraced this new faith, or this new interpretation of the old faith, the overwhelming majority of whom are people who would adorn any communion. That they are devoted to the cause they have espoused is evidenced, not merely by their lavish liberality in rearing handsome meeting-houses, but by their extraordinary sensitiveness to moderate and candid criticism; doubts, objections, questions being usually dealt with as signs of unreasoning hostility.

The phenomena of Christian Science differ from those of Spiritism in that they are mundane—in that they center in wonders wrought on the living, and not in revelations brought by the dead. They consist in healings accomplished without drugs and without aid from certified physicians of the regular medical profession. The alleged performance of marvelous cures, however, is not a novelty. Accounts of them exist in connection with the most ancient of creeds, and the power to perform them has been claimed by pagan as well as Christian, by Protestant as well as Catholic. If human testimony is worth anything, they were wrought at the shrine of

the Asklepieia of Greece and in the old temple of Æsculapius at Rome, just as in recent times they have been witnessed at Lourdes and St. Winifred's Well, and at the tombs of Mussulman Marabouts. No religion, ancient or modern, has had a monopoly of them, and they have even been effected where religion of every kind was ignored. An instance of this we have in the remarkable cure of Harriet Martineau, a gifted woman, and a vigorous disbeliever in the supernatural. A pelvic tumor, which had long afflicted her, was so far overcome by mesmeric influences that, though it was found in her body after death, it ceased during her long life to cause her inconvenience or trouble.

Eminent scientists, like Gasquet and Charcot, do not question the reality of the healings which have taken place during the nineteenth century at Christian shrines. The former of these authorities visited Lourdes several years ago, and carefully studied the reputed and reported miracles. He testifies that invalids whose symptoms were purely neurotic were generally restored to health, but when they betrayed cancer, tuberculosis, blindness, and deafness the results were not so encouraging. His explanation of what he saw at Lourdes is summed up in the acknowledgment that the cures "were evidently, in one way or another, due to the influence of the mind on the body." And any one who will read Tuke[1] on this subject will no longer doubt the wonderful power the mind exerts over the mortal conditions of the flesh. This was so fully recognized by Charcot, that he often

[1] "Illustrations of the Influence of Mind upon the Body." See also Zola's "Lourdes"; also "British Med. Journal," June 11 and 18, 1898, and June 17, 1899.

sent patients suffering from what Sir John Russell Reynolds termed "paralysis from idea" to the holy waters at Lourdes. It is reasonable to suppose when the action of the mind is invigorated and intensified by deep religious convictions that the cures accomplished will be more striking and more numerous. Consequently we have no right to deny the reality of those which have occurred under the influence of Christian Science. They are doubtless in every sense as deserving of credit as those wrought some years ago by faith-healers, or as those which have taken place at Catholic shrines, or which have been brought about by the personal touch of the peripatetic enthusiasts who have wandered over the country casting out diseases as Christ cast out devils. But from the occurrence of these phenomena in association with various types of religious belief, and occasionally in connection with none, or, what is worse, in connection with the pernicious creed of Mohammed, it logically follows that the philosophy contained in "Science and Health," whether true or false, does not reveal the true secret of their performance. Where that philosophy has never been heard of, and where it has been openly rejected, healing marvels have not been infrequent, and, therefore, they cannot be ascribed to the strange metaphysical theories which it advances.

But however caused, a religion which makes them its chief distinction assuredly fails in several respects to suggest a correspondence with apostolic Christianity. When our Lord sent out his disciples to teach, the healing of disease was not their main business. It was only incidental to, and confirmatory of, their great mis-

sion to mankind. Subsequently, after the ascension, while miracles of healing were performed, they were too few in number for the inference to be warranted that the church had been set apart, if not exclusively, yet principally, for the conquest through supernaturalism of sickness and infirmities. This subject does not form the staple of apostolic speech and literature, as it does in Christian Science gatherings and publications. From what we know of the early church, as its history is recorded in the New Testament, no hint is given of meetings where the disciples discussed their ailments, or devoted their thoughts or their praises to this theme. That "gifts of healing," like the "gift of tongues," had been conferred on some of God's people is not for a moment questioned; but as they were evidently restricted to a few, and as hardly anything is said of their exercise, it is clear that they occupied only a subordinate and not the chief place in Christian thought and activity. The modern church may have erred in not giving more attention to the possibility of restoring these healing gifts; but she has not erred in declining to assume that she is the sole or leading remedial agency in the world, and that she is under obligation to antagonize medical science and condemn the use of those curatives which a beneficent Creator has implanted in nature. As well might she condemn the use of mineral springs and of the rejuvenating sunshine. And any denomination, new or old, that thus fails to comprehend the genius of our faith, and thus unreasonably narrows its ministrations, whatever success may attend its early endeavors, will in the long run lose its hold on the judgment and affections of mankind.

It hardly falls within the province of these lectures to review the philosophy of which Christian Science is supposed to be the embodiment. Candidly, I am grateful that I am under no obligation to undertake this unperformable task. I have read carefully "Science and Health," and I am compelled to confess that it is too much for my "mortal mind." I do not understand it. There are thousands of excellent people who acknowledge that the Bible is too deep for them, and who yet declare that "Science and Health" is translucent and transparent and easily fathomable. And still, when I have sought from some of these confident individuals a little light as to the meaning of the book, they have betrayed as much hesitancy as I myself have felt. I am beginning to suspect that they comprehend it as little as I do, and I am curious to know whether its author could elucidate it herself, or whether, if closely pressed, she would not have to imitate Robert Browning, who is reported to have answered, when asked to give the meaning of a passage he had penned some years before: "I wrote it. And when I wrote it God knew and I knew what it meant. But now, I suppose that God still knows; I do not." But I hope the author will not be hastily blamed for her conceivable forgetfulness, or I be too harshly censured for my obtuseness; for I question whether my mortal mind can quite rise to the level, for instance, of this description of Adam:

> Error; a falsity; the belief in original sin, sickness, and death; evil; the opposite of Good, or God, and his creation; a curse: a belief in intelligent matter, finiteness and mortality; dust to dust; red sandstone; nothingness; the first god of mythology; not God's man, who represents the one God, and is his own image

and likeness ; the opposite of Spirit and its creations : that which is not the image and likeness of Good, but a material belief, opposed to the one Mind, or Spirit ; so-called finite mind, producing other minds, thus making "gods many and lords many" ; a product of nothing, as the opposite of something, an unreality as opposed to the great reality of spiritual existence and creation ; a so-called man, whose origin, substance, and mind are supposed to be the opposite of God or Spirit ; an inverted image of Spirit ; the image and likeness of God's opposites, namely, matter, sin, sickness, and death ; the antipodes of Truth, termed error, the counterfeit of Life, which ultimates in death ; the opposition of Love, called hate ; the antipodes of Spirit's creation, called self-creative matter ; Immortality's opposite, mortality, that of which wisdom saith, "Thou shalt surely die." This name represents the false supposition that life is not eternal, but has beginning and end ; that the infinite enters the finite ; intelligence passes into non-intelligence, and soul dwells in material sense ; that immortal mind results in matter, and matter in mortal mind ; that the one God and Creator entered what he created, and then disappeared in the atheism of matter.

Until I read this paragraph I never knew what a composite of indescribable monstrosities this Adam was. I know now ; or at least, I do not know ; and I venture the assertion that Adam would not recognize his own features in this singular mirror ; and I am under the impression that no human being, not even Fichte or Hegel, familiar enough with involved phraseology, could render it intelligible to mankind.

Neither is it easy to make out what is intended by this definition of "mortal mind" :

Nothing claiming to be something, for Mind is immortal ; error creating other errors ; a belief that life, substance, and intelligence are in and of matter ; the belief that life has a beginning and therefore an end ; the belief that man is the offspring of

mortals ; the belief that there can be more than one creator ; idolatry, sin, sickness, death.

To be thus endowed would indeed be an awful visitation, if we could only quite make out just what is meant. But we may well ask how can such a concatenation of errors and evils be possible, if the optimistic conceptions contained in the following sentences are true :

Man is spiritual and perfect : he is incapable of sin, sickness, and death, inasmuch as he derives his essence from God. Hence, the real man cannot depart from holiness. Evil is an illusion, and has no real basis. Sin exists only as long as the material illusion remains ; it is the sense of sin and not the sinful soul which must be lost. Sin, sickness, and death should cease through Christian Science.

In view of these inaccessible heights and cloud-summits of "Science and Health," one may well be excusable if he hesitates to climb, and if he thinks himself not altogether insane for declining the perilous venture. Bnt there is one thing clear enough through all this complicated philosophy of healing, which the humblest mind, "mortal" or otherwise, cannot refrain from regretting, and which must inevitably confuse, perplex, and work out some very pernicious sequences, and that is, the determination to deal with many of our most reliable experiences as illusions, phantasmagoria, and self-deceptions. A very competent inquirer, J. W. Conley, D. D., has summed up this peculiar feature of its teachings :

Mrs. Eddy declares : "Nothing we can say or believe regarding matter is true except that matter is unreal." She defines matter as that "which mortal mind sees, feels, hears, tastes, and

smells only in belief." "(Christian) Science reveals material man as a dream at all times, and never as the real Being." "The material senses testify falsely." "The material atom is an outlined falsity of consciousness." "(Christian) Science and material sense conflict at all points, from the revolution of the earth to the fall of a sparrow." Scores of similar quotations might be given. The whole material universe, from remotest star to minutest atom, is a strange, inexplicable, complicated delusion. It is the product of the "mortal mind," and the "mortal mind" itself is defined as "a solecism in language," "something untrue and unreal." This attitude toward matter and the testimony of the senses is more serious than at first it may appear. It means that it is folly to study astronomy, geology, chemistry, biology, or any of the sciences which have contributed so marvelously to the progress of this age. Such studies only tend more hopelessly to involve man in the bondage to that which is fundamentally false.[1]

But, unfortunately, it means more than this. It imposes on the world a series of fictions, which do not in the least alter the facts, and which predispose the sufferer to rest content with fictitious antidotes. Are all the physical pangs and mental griefs of our race merely hallucinations? Are they only unsubstantial shadows? But could it be proven that they are these and nothing more,—a conclusion that never can be established, for if a malady is only a morbid mode of thought, how comes it that the observer has the same impression of the invalid that the patient has of himself?—this would not render them less painful, burdensome, and corroding. Call it by any name we will, a toothache is a toothache still; and if it is only a fantasy, the fantasy is as unendurable as the reality would be. Sometimes we deceive ourselves and imagine that a different formula changes the character of the thing described. But if we substi-

[1] "The Standard," Chicago, February 25, 1899.

tute the word "heredity" for "depravity," we only delude ourselves if we suppose that the more scientific term has obliterated the evil condition represented by the theological one. So disease is disease, however the nomenclature may be altered to meet the exigencies of some philosophical theory. To think of it otherwise compels us to think of the cure as being as fictitious as the ailment, and this, so far as Christianity is concerned, nullifies the sublime realities on which its validity and power rest—the incarnation, the atonement, and the resurrection. The terminology which suggests to the mind these sublime acts may be retained, but if they are emptied of their historical significance, as they are by this philosophy, then only a phantom of the truth, a glittering simulacrum, survives. And thus religion comes to consist of an interchange of hallucinations, an assemblage and interplay of fancies, dreams, and illusions, which, however they may be set forth in the name of "science" and with a show of scientific exactness, cannot exert a practical influence on a world where real hunger and real thirst create a craving that will not be forever satisfied with the kind of viands provided. It is not necessary to lodge a protest against the idealism underlying Christian Science, when we repudiate what we regard as strained and illegitimate inferences from its premises.

That the mind is superior to the body we nothing doubt. That the consistent explication and defense of this supremacy is of great value to modern society we do not question. For the service rendered in this direction by Christian Scientists we are duly appreciative. But when they intimate that there is no body over which the mind can be lord, and no real external world

in which it can display its supremacy, they may well be tolerant of those who confess that they cannot yet see how things can *be*, and *not* be, at the same time, nor denominate those who courteously differ from them "materialists," when their only fault is, if fault it be, that they cannot bring themselves to endorse an idealism which leaves nothing to idealize.

To me it is exceedingly distasteful that the account I am giving of "modern substitutes" should require an introduction of Mormonism into a lecture where Christian Science has been treated, for they have nothing in common and are as wide apart as the poles. If the latter is too abstruse, abstract, speculative, and impalpable, the former is far too concrete, too unambiguous, too earthy, fleshly, and sensual. And if we had to choose between the two, without a moment's hesitancy every self-respecting mind would decisively reject Mormonism. That this system, with very little to recommend it, and with tenets and infamies to condemn it, should have succeeded as it has, is one of the extraordinary anomalies of an extraordinary century. "In its origin," Doctor Bacon writes: "Mormonism is distinctly American —a system of gross, palpable imposture, contrived by a disreputable adventurer, Joe Smith, with the aid of three confederates, who afterward confessed the fraud and perjury of which they had been guilty."[1] Hepworth Dixon, in his review of its teachings, says that among other peculiar doctrines, it holds man to have existed from all eternity, to be an uncreated intelligence destined to endure forever, whose kingdom is made up of his wives, a possession not only for time but for eternity

[1] "Hist. Am. Christianity," p. 335.

as well, and whose religious organization, known as Mormonism, is the kingdom of God on earth.[2]

It is a comfort to be assured that it no longer regards itself as a Christian sect, but as a rival and an enemy. Mohammed, Joseph Smith, and Brigham Young it associates with Jesus Christ in the honors of divinity, and it declares that the business of deities is the propagation of souls to inhabit bodies begotten on earth, sexuality permeating every portion of its creed as thoroughly as it entered into the religious philosophy of ancient Egypt. "The saints on leaving this world are deified, and their glory is in proportion to the number of their wives and children, hence the necessity and justification of polygamy." However, polygamy is not sanctioned in the original "Book of Mormon," but in a revelation to Smith, July 12, 1843, a timely interposition of the unseen Ahriman to mollify the prophet's lawful wife, who objected to his having quite a number of illegal ones. And in this instance, fraud was followed by swift retribution. Through the proclamation of this doctrine Smith was involved in armed conflict with the State authorities. He was persuaded to surrender and stand his trial. He consented and was imprisoned, with a companion named Hyrum, in the Carthage jail. But on the first night of his incarceration, June 27, 1844, a crowd of armed men forced their way into the prison and shot him and his companion dead. From this bloody work the great migration sprang, for realizing that they would no longer be tolerated in Illinois, the Mormons, under the leadership of Brigham Young, went out to found a new State in the then unpeopled region of Utah.

[2] "New America," Vol. I., p. 24.

By an astute and persevering system of proselyting, converts were collected from the manufacturing and mining districts of Great Britain, and from some of the continental nations of Europe. Lately, however, Mormon missionaries have invaded American cities, and have boasted of their success in winning over not a few of the citizens to their way of thinking, and presumably more to their way of acting. Nevertheless, with the increase of numbers and respectability, and with the growing proximity of the civilized world to Salt Lake, there are not lacking signs that polygamy is doomed. Moreover, a happy schism has occurred, and there now exists the "Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints," with Plano, Illinois, as its headquarters, and with "anti-polygamy" as its rallying cry. Consequently, it is not easy to foresee just what the future has in store for Mormonism—possibly more divisions, and as the country contiguous to Salt Lake becomes more populous, and opportunities diminish for the interference of the patriarch, the apostles, the elders, priests and other officials in political affairs, probably the Mormon Church will lose its hold on its members and finally disappear. While we would not in the least encourage harsh treatment, or anything bordering on proscription, it does seem as though the people of the United States should, through enlightenment, sober remonstrance, and the extension of American ideas, labor to bring this monstrous superstition to an end. A religion that grounds its claims to recognition on a book which printer Solomon Spaulding confessed he had written as a romance, that has in its history records of resistance to the law and courts of the land, and the sad story of the Moun-

tain Meadow massacre, and that imperils the integrity and sanctity of the home, degrading woman and cursing manhood, is a blemish and an incongruity in the midst of a free republic; and, while it may be tolerated for a season, by all peaceful and lawful means it should be effaced as speedily as possible.[1]

The manifest unfitness of any or all of these cults, philosophies, and creeds to serve as a substitute for Christianity, strengthens the conviction that the ancient Faith is not destined to perish from the earth. Its sweet *euthanasia*—or expiring voice—will not be heard in the coming century; nor is it even conceivable that the death of our religion could ever tranquilly and peacefully be accomplished. Never will it sigh itself away. Never will it slowly crumble and sink quietly and unnoticed, like some tree of the forest rotten through and through and beautifully festooned with parasites. Were it doomed, it would fall like the mighty forest king uprooted by the tempest, with crashing, echoing sounds, and crushing beneath its ponderous weight many a tender growth. That was a great discovery Johann Von Müller, the famous historian, made in 1782. Writing from Cassel in that year, he said that he had taken it into his head to read the New Testament, and adds:

> How shall I describe what I found? I had not read it for many years and was prejudiced. The light which struck Paul with blindness on his way to Damascus was not more surprising to him than to me, when I suddenly discovered the fulfillment of all hopes, the highest perfection of philosophy, the explanation

[1] See Hyde, "Book of Doctrine and Covenants"; N. W. Greene, "Mormonism"; Gunnison, "Latter Saints."

of all revolutions, the key to all the seeming contradictions of the physical and moral worlds. . . The whole world seemed to be ordered for the sole purpose of furthering the religion of the Redeemer, and if this religion is not divine, I understand nothing at all. . . Not till I knew our Lord was all clear to me ; with him there is nothing which I am not able to solve.

But if Christ and his religion are thus interwoven with the world's thought and life, and if they are the explanation of social changes and progress, and if there is such an intermixture of their spirit and influence in the affairs of men and nations, it is not conceivable that these elements could be eliminated without shock and disaster, and without convulsions and consternation. No ; the overthrow of Christianity is not probable. The wrench to society would be too severe for such a calamity to be contemplated with serenity. It seems at this present moment to lie beyond the range of possible contingencies. The ineptitude of its rivals is one guarantee of its survival ; and its own inherent worth and grace is another. Being what it is, and doing what it does, its immortality is secure. Confident in its own essential truth and nobility, its creed of hope is formulated for it in the language of Carlyle :

Await the issue : in all battles if you await the issue, each fighter is prospered according to his right. His right and his might, at the close of the account, are one and the same. He has fought with all his might, and in exact proportion to his right he has prevailed. His very death is no victory over him : he dies indeed, but his work lives. The cause thou fightest for, in so far as it is true, so far and no farther, but precisely so far, is sure of victory.

IX

THE DISRUPTION AND REUNION

With zeal we watch,
And weigh the doctrines while the spirit 'scapes;
And in the carving of our cummin-seeds,
Our metaphysical hair-splittings, fail
To note the orbit of that star of love
Which never sets.

Each differing sect whose base
Is on the same pure word, doth strictly scan
Its neighbor's superstructure,—point and arch,
Buttress and turret,—till the hymn of praise,
That from each temple should go up to God,
Sinks in the critic's tone.

—*Mrs. Sigourney.*

IX

THE MOVEMENT FOR THE RESTORATION OF PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN UNION

In protesting against any condition of things we deplore, not uncommonly we are tempted to exaggerate. Gazing for a long time and steadfastly on the object of our reproach, we may lose sight of everything else, and therefore, come to speak of that which fills the entire field of vision in terms of unwarranted hyperbole. Thus a recent eloquent and amiable writer, in pleading for an American National Church, has expressed his estimate of the evil and extent of denominationalism in the United States somewhat more extravagantly than the facts admit.[1] This, however, ought to be said in extenuation—he derives his figures from the Government Census of 1890. Official reports frequently do not nicely discriminate, and consequently they are sometimes misleading. But when they are used as a basis for an argument by an author, they should be very carefully sifted. The census states that there are one hundred and forty-three distinct religious denominations in this country. But it should be noted that these are not all Christian sects, and that some of them, while Christian, are not large enough to be entitled to special mention. The official enumeration includes Jews, Theosophists, Ethical Culturists, Spiritualists, and some

[1] Rev. W. R. Huntington's "A National Church."

thirty additional organizations of not over one thousand members each. Surely it hardly needs discussion to show that only by the most charitable oblivion to palpable distinctions, can these various bodies be classified together either as "Christian," or as "denominations." Of the actually professing Christian denominations in the United States, from the Roman Catholics with their eight or nine millions of population, to the Protestants with their eighteen or nineteen millions of members, there are only sixty-three sects that outnumber ten thousand adherents. Let us confess that the situation is scandalous enough; but let us not through inadvertence, or through zeal for the realization of a cherished ideal, create the impression that it is worse than it really is.

In England, likewise, the Registrar General's Report is misleading. That official document announces one hundred and twenty-two different sects in Great Britain, with upward of twenty thousand places of worship. But many of these bodies are only separated from others by the most infinitesimal of variations, no graver than the question of free pews or rented seats, by which churches of the same denomination may be distinguished from each other. None but an official mind would ever think of registering these as actually different denominations. With good reason, therefore, "The Saturday Review," considering the Report of the Registrar, inquires:

> Who, for instance, is to discriminate the precise shade of theological difference which separates General, Old, New, Particular, Strict, Seventh Day, and Union Baptists from one another? Or how are Modern, New, Original, Primitive, Reformed, Refuge,

Temperance, and United Methodists respectively distinguished in their belief? Why should Christian Brethren be separately organized from Christadelphians, and Christian Believers from Believers in Christ; and what is the precise shade of distinction between Disciples of Christ and Disciples in Christ? We will not ask why Christian Eliasites and Christian Israelites and Israelites cannot combine, as we feel very much in the dark as to what either designation may be intended to convey, but there seems a common taint of Judaism about all the three. Then, again, why should there be no less than eleven Free Churches, with various secondary designations of Catholic, Episcopal, Christian, Gospel, Grace Gospel Christian, and the like? What is the difference between Lutherans, Danish Lutherans, and German Lutherans? And who on earth are the German Roman Catholics?

While the officers who collect statistics may not be expected to inquire as closely as this writer does, and may not be called on to generalize more and particularize less, Christian people should at least protest against this inadvertent magnifying of an evil which sorely reflects on their piety and good sense. Matthew Arnold satirized the "dissidence of dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion," and a Free Kirk minister is reported to have prayed "that we might all be baptized in the spirit of disruption"; but we ought to demand that all critics should have strict regard to the fact that the divergences of faith are often more fanciful than real.

Neither let us imagine that these divisions are novelties, and are the result of the Reformation in Germany and the triumph of liberty in America. They are neither indigenous to the new world, nor to the century passing into history. All or nearly all of the various rival sects existing within the territory of the United

States are to be found elsewhere, particularly, as we have just seen, in England. Unitarians, Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and other bodies familiar to us in this country, have likewise "a habitation and a name" in other lands, and even the unity of orthodox Russia is disturbed by "Stundists," "Molokains," "Spirit-wrestlers," and other dissidents. And as there is no sufficient ground for the allegation that the Great Republic is the fruitful field of schism, so the reiterated declaration that schism is essentially modern and the necessary product of the Protestant contest and contention, does not rest on adequate historical evidence. To say nothing of the seeming party lines that occasioned anxiety in the apostolic churches, we have at an early period the rise of Novatians, Donatists, Montanists, and the sects which developed from the Arian controversies. Later on we have the Nestorians and the Monophysites, the latter of whom are still represented by the Armenian, the Coptic, and the Abyssinian communions; and still nearer to our own time and yet before the Reformation, we have the Waldenses, the Paulicians, the Henricians, the Poor Men of Lyons, the Lollards, the Hussites, the Anabaptists, and the Albigenses. Nor does this list exhaust the number. Neither should we overlook the disruption of what was called the Catholic Church,—a designation first employed by Ignatius of Antioch in his epistle addressed to the church at Smyrna in the second century, by which he discriminated between the universal church and any individual portion of it,—into the Greek and Latin rites. This memorable schism, in its beginnings coincident with the division of the Roman Empire into East and West,

but finally determined by grave ecclesiastical issues, which culminated with the taking of Constantinople and the consequent violent usurpations of papal authority, was not due to the Protestant principle, but rather to weaknesses and ambitions which need not here be characterized. Such a breach as this proves conclusively that the assumption of too much authority may work as disastrously as the claim to too much freedom. If the "right of private judgment" has led to the multiplication of sects since the Reformation, the denial of that right prior to the Reformation produced a similar harvest; and even since then, the denial has stood in the way of harmony, and has occasioned and justified the ephemeral schism of Ronge and Czerki, the brief career of the "German Catholic Church" (1845), and the movement, still destined to be heard from, of the "Old Catholics" (1870), led at the beginning by the brave and scholarly Döllinger.

I am not apologizing for existing divisions, when I resent the hasty generalizations of those writers, lay and cleric, who, disregarding the facts of history, arraign the Protestant Faith as being almost exclusively and culpably responsible for their prevalence. The spectacle is sad enough without rendering it worse by recriminations; nevertheless, the conventional misrepresentations on the subject are so unfair that to pass them unchallenged would be to promote their circulation. But in entering my *caveat* against them, I have no desire to overlook the fact that the principal business at this late day, is not so much to fix the blame for the multiplication of sects, as to seek to diminish their number, to abate their rivalries, and co-ordinate their forces.

That mischief has in some degree and in various directions been wrought by the sectarianism of Christendom is not open to doubt. We may differ in our estimate of the mischief done, and we may not agree as to the possibility of preventing the appearance of certain denominations in the past, but we cannot help deploring the injurious impressions made, and the loss of aggressive power experienced by alienations and opposing camps. There is no question but that the world puts the very worst construction possible on the existence of so many religious schools of thought and activity, minimizing the greater things in which they are one, and magnifying the lesser things by which they are divided. Attention has also been called to the unseemly struggles of feeble churches, professing creeds hardly differing from one another in substance, for support in weak and small communities. It has been said, and said truly, that there ought to be some way by which towns and villages should be relieved from the strain on their pocket and their piety, imposed on both by religious factions. When Catholics insist on invading a Protestant settlement of two or three thousand persons, and when Protestants are represented by Methodist, Congregationalist, and Baptist, with an Adventist in addition, may not the inhabitants be excused if their confidence is somewhat shaken in the faith they all in common profess, and may they not be pardoned if they fret at the financial burden imposed? From such a state of things there ought to be some way of deliverance. Christians ought to act reasonably. When the religious necessities of a town are being met, the church doing the work should not be hindered or an-

tagonized, because there may happen to be some objectionable *Filioque* in her creed. She should be given a free fair field, and the pent-up energies and the resources of other bodies be expended on neglected regions which are crying for cultivation.

Moreover, it has been frequently charged that sectarian divisions have impeded the progress of the gospel in heathen lands. Twenty different Churches we are told are contending with each other, and laboring for the conversion of the Hindus. And it is asserted that a similar spectacle may be witnessed in China and elsewhere. I am certain, however, that these representations are, as is usual in such discussions, too wide-sweeping. Missionaries of evangelical societies assure us that there is very little, if any, friction between the teachers and preachers of the various denominations. They rather co-operate with each other and assist one another, and refrain from discussions among themselves. A missionary comity has likewise been developed of late years, and the forces at work are not being wasted in unseemly strife. The evil complained of, whatever it may have been fifty years ago, is now one of appearance mainly. There is undoubtedly a seeming, an outward show of separateness that must act unfavorably on the mind of the heathen, especially as he cannot be expected to perceive the spirit of unity that is back of this lack of uniformity. Everything consistent with honor and honesty should be done to correct this injurious impression.

The principal hindrance to missionary triumph, however, does not arise from rivalries between Protestant sects, but springs from the frequently undisguised hostility between Roman Catholics and Protestants.

When the French Government years ago handed over the missions of the latter in Tahiti to Catholic emissaries; and when in Madagascar King Radema was murdered, and these two great sections of Christendom accused each other of the crime; and when in 1845 the Protestants were ejected from Fernando Po by the Spanish in the interests of the hierarchy; and when Turkish soldiers have been obliged to preserve the peace between the Latin and Greek communions in their unholy strife for supremacy in the holy places; and when Protestants have been violently opposed by both contestants when they have sought the sacred shrines of their common faith, the effect on the unbeliever could not fail to be of the worst and most damaging character. "See how these Christians hate one another" must be the natural feeling and ejaculation in view of such deadly, bitter, and desperate hostility. As long as it survives the advance of the Cross will be checked. Thus at home and abroad there is need for readjustment, harmony, for better understanding between Christian parties, particularly between Romanists and Protestants, and for the arrival at some intelligent conception of what kind of basis is revealed in Scripture for the future union and co-operation of Christ's disciples.

While the disasters wrought by dissensions are open to all, it ought not to be rashly concluded that the ecclesiastical uniformity which dominated medievalism was an unmixed good, or that it furnishes a model once more to be copied; and neither ought it to be dogmatically affirmed that denominationalism in the progress of Christianity could have been entirely avoided, and has in every respect exerted a pernicious influence on relig-

ion and society. None of these positions can be successfully maintained. It is well known that the condition of the one church prior to the sixteenth century was deplorably bad, and did not contribute to the spiritual well-being of men and nations. On this point we have the testimony of Professor Döllinger, a long-time instructor in ecclesiastical history at Munich, and a devout Roman Catholic. Writing of the German Reformation, he says:

> It was a movement so deeply rooted in the needs of the age, and sprang so inevitably from the ecclesiastical conditions of the centuries immediately preceding, that it took possession of all the nations of the West in turn. So powerfully did it sway men's minds in Italy, the native home of the papacy, that Paul IV. declared the Inquisition, with its dungeons and blazing pyres, to be the only sure and firm support of the papacy there. . . And more than this too, the popes themselves could not deny—for it was notorious—that Rome itself was the seat and source of corruption, and the popes its authors and disseminators. Adrian VI. had it openly proclaimed at the diet of Nuremburg, 1522, that everything in the church had been perverted, and a disease had spread from the head to the members, from the popes to the rest of the rulers of the church.

And in contrast with this degeneration, he refers to the higher morality, and stricter discipline distinguishing the smaller religious communities; and farther on he adds:

> Nor can we blind ourselves to the fact that the Reformation has had many beneficial results, and has in various ways proved a gain even to the ancient church which was so hostile to it. We see that it has created a rich intellectual world, and given an impulse to every form of mental activity. It has become the most powerful and permanent force in modern history.[1]

[1] "Reunion of the Churches," pp. 61, 65, and 5, 12.

When we read these words, not penned on behalf of Protestantism, and not for the purpose of encouraging divisions, we are almost tempted to agree with James Madison, who in the "Federalist" expressed this judgment:

> In a free government the security for civil rights must be the same as that for religious rights. It consists, in the one case, in the multiplicity of interests, and, in the other, in the multiplicity of sects. The degree of security in both cases will depend on the number of interests and sects.

But happily it is not necessary to go so far as this in recognizing the perils described by Döllinger, which threatened everything sacred and worth saving in the sixteenth century. The wretched plight of the church at that time proves that uniformity is not everything, and that, when fashioned after the medieval type, it may serve to foster corruption and tyranny. Sectarianism is bad enough, and ought as far as possible to be discouraged; but if the twentieth century has to choose between it and a uniformity similar to the one condemned by Döllinger, then without a moment's hesitation the latter should be rejected.

And this decision will be reached with less hesitancy when the debt of society to dissent is taken into consideration. The benefits conferred by the Huguenots on France; the splendid achievements of the Nonconformists in England; and the heroic service to civilization and progress of the various churches in America, may well reconcile the world to the loss of sameness in outward form and ceremony. These denominations in the countries named, have been the constant champions of civil and of personal freedom; they have led in

movements, public and private, for the enlightenment of the masses; they have been the ardent supporters of reform, the spirit of Luther reappearing in them and clamoring against abuses in government, in industry, and in social habits; and in America, they have conquered the savage wilderness, have dotted the prairies with schools and churches, and have extended a Christian civilization from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It has been admitted that the brilliant deeds they have wrought could not have been accomplished so speedily or so thoroughly by a great consolidated historical hierarchy. What America is to-day, morally and spiritually, is primarily due to the aggressive, self-sacrificing endeavors of Methodists, Congregationalists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and other so-called sects; and though these bodies are sometimes spoken of contemptuously, and though the effort is being made to overshadow them, and to obscure what they have done by the pompous splendor of sacerdotalism, it is manifest that America would have been immeasurably poorer than she is in those things which make for national strength and dignity but for their ministry; and that it would be better for her future, if there is no other alternative, that she should perpetually consent to be distracted by numerous sects, whose labors on the whole have proven beneficial, than to risk the dangerous supremacy of a single church patterned after that of the Middle Ages.

If in criticising and deploring schisms it is unfair not to take into account the advantages that have been derived from them, so it is also ungenerous to speak of them as having had their origin in a desire for division or in a blind devotion to metaphysical and trivial doc-

trinal distinctions. Several of them owe their existence in this century to peculiar conditions, some of them developed from abuses; and most of them have vindicated their right to organize themselves into churches by the practical services they have rendered the kingdom of Christ. The separation of the Unitarians from the Trinitarians in the United States, beginning really with the impossibility of obtaining from bishops Seabury and Provoost episcopal ordination for James Freeman (1785), was not the result of a deliberate plan to rend the church, but was the logical outcome of radically divergent opinion. The situation became unendurable to the conservative party when Henry Ware, a Unitarian, was chosen to the divinity professorship (1805) on the Hollis foundation. To coalesce any longer was considered impracticable. But the division was preferable to the war of words, and to the distractions of controversy, which were surely undermining the stability of the church in New England. Moreover, the contending parties living together in the same house, on account of the domestic feuds, could hardly be expected to do justice to each other's aims, motives, and piety. But moving apart, on opposite sides of the street, they were in a better position to observe the worth of those with whom they had been in controversy. And thus divided, without sacrificing their doctrinal convictions, they have been able to cherish a neighborly spirit, to perform neighborly acts, and to acknowledge generously what they respectively owe, on the one side to Channing, Freeman Clarke, and Edward Everett Hale, and on the other to Phillips Brooks, Rollin H. Neale, James Manning, and Edward Kirk.

Chalmers and Candlish, with some three hundred and forty ministerial associates, had no wish to abandon the Scotch Establishment when they went out in 1843 and founded the Free Kirk. But the Headship of Christ in his own empire was at stake. Was he to govern, or was his prerogative to be usurped by worldly patrons? Were heads of families to be permitted to cancel ministerial appointments without giving valid and tangible reasons? How could any interference on their part be harmonized with the teachings of Christ's word? The issue was made, and the great disruption occurred. And was it not better for the cause of religion in Scotland and elsewhere that our Lord's crown-rights should be maintained, even though visible unity had to be sacrificed, than that his church should lose her independence and spiritual character? It is easy to criticise, easy to talk with rhetorical vagueness about the sin of rending the seamless robe of Christ, but when the very regal robe itself is in jeopardy, is it not preferable to clutch at it and preserve it, though torn, than to abandon it whole to those who would hide it beneath their worldly ecclesiastical pomps and vanities? I, for one, am grateful to God for Chalmers and his heroic colleagues, and believe that Christ is more likely everywhere to be recognized as the only and supreme Head of the Church, through their protest and their manly renunciation of sacred fellowships and lifelong ties.

In the United States, about the time disruption was maturing in Scotland, there developed a movement, sometimes traced to the indirect influence of the Haldanes and to the theory known as Sandemanianism,

both also of Scotland, and inspired by the genius of Alexander Campbell, one of the most remarkable religious leaders of the nineteenth century. To this new departure the name of its founder was given by the community at large; but its adherents called themselves "Christians," and "Disciples." I shall term them "Disciples" in this brief reference to their progress and mission. They were an earnest and aggressive people, and probably are so still, and multiplied rapidly in the South and southwestern portions of the country. Their peculiar tenets gave rise to much controversy, and it is doubtful whether any summary could be given that would prove satisfactory to their advocates. But there was one teaching for which they were distinguished that concerns us here. They raised their voice against sectarianism and announced themselves as its destroyer. It seems that they imagined they had abolished it as far as they themselves were concerned by taking to themselves the name of Disciples, by professing to derive all their sentiments from the New Testament, and by organizing themselves into another sect, yet further dividing the body of Christ. The word "sect" from the Latin *secta*, a path, a beaten way, hence to follow, is always applied to a portion of the Christian host, and never to it as a whole; and consequently, the Disciples have to assume that they are the totality of the redeemed on earth—which I am sure they would not assert—or in the true sense of the word they constitute a sect. In spirit they may be as catholic as the most catholic soul could wish, but that does not alter the fact that when they withdrew and set up for themselves they either became the whole of Christianity or a part, and

if a part, then they became what they labored to convince others it was wrong to be. Nevertheless, the value of their testimony is not to be depreciated. It meant something to have this large number of intelligent people join together in a protest against the strife and discord of Christian churches. And the seeming impossibility of their escaping from the entanglement they condemned only added pathos and power to their plea. It indicated that even when there is no sectarianism in the heart, we are obliged to affiliate with a sect to gain a fulcrum for our spiritual leverage. Hardly anything more than this is needed to demonstrate that the Disciples are right in their contention, and that some measures looking toward unification should be adopted. They are entitled to commendation for their devotion to a vital principle, and one that is destined to exert an incalculable influence on the Christianity of the immediate future.

And as we respect their aims and motives, we ought to honor other sectaries, and not in the superficial way, unhappily too common, ridicule and deride, as though they had without sense or reason rushed into secession. How could the Universalists have acted otherwise than they have? They were compelled either to remain silent and hide their convictions, or to create for themselves a free arena where these could be openly advocated. The Cumberland Presbyterians, likewise, had hardly any other alternative open to them. But for their determination that the ministry of the word should not be restricted to classically educated men, the world might have been deprived of such preachers as Charles Haddon Spurgeon and such evangelists as Dwight L.

Moody. We ought not even to be too ready with caustic criticisms when the Irvingites, and their singular "Catholic Apostolic" angels and rituals, pass before us, and the Plymouth Brethren, and the various Advent bodies, following the discredited predictions of Miller in 1843, join the strange procession; for they represent conscientious convictions, pathetic gropings in the dark, and the sacred enthusiasm that surrenders the praise of men, and often the comforts of life, for the sake of an idea. And it is not so certain, but rather otherwise, that they have not done as much good in their way as Theosophists, Ethical Culturists, and Free Religionists, who are usually taken seriously by society and shown the most marked consideration. These also are entitled to respect. But while I plead for this kind of fair and sympathetic treatment, these denominations, and the larger and older ones, should remember that they have delivered their message, and that, in so far as it is sane and scriptural, it has been widely accepted by the bodies most closely allied to them, and therefore the time has arrived for a new departure by which present divisions may gradually give way to a new and lasting union.

For this many earnest souls have pleaded during the nineteenth century, and for this many meetings have been held and various measures recommended. Of the strength and significance of this gracious movement a recent writer has taken account, and expresses himself in these encouraging words:

> There are signs in the clouds of the ecclesiastical sky that the church has no rest in her divisions; and the feeling is deepening, that all who equally center in Christ, and call him Lord,

ought to be one. Did he not pray that they all might be one? And will he not fulfill his own prayers? Is not the breath of his power stealing on all the churches? And must we not ascribe their concern for unity to his secret working? The demonstration before the nations of the world of their actual unity would be nothing less than the inauguration of the kingdom and reign of Christ: he must reign, till all powers and governments are subject to him. If a strong majority of the churches would declare and manifest their unity, not necessarily in their creeds and forms of worship, but in the one spirit of Christ, those who affect to be under Christ, and stand aloof from unity, would feel that they were rebuked and humiliated. And it would stand revealed that they stiffly and stubbornly held to the tombs and dry bones of antiquity; and would not allow the living Christ of to-day to influence them.[1]

At Lambeth and the Vatican this subject has occupied the attention of prelates and popes, and while they have not agreed as to terms, and while some of the terms talked about are as impossible to men of this age as would be the demand that the Ptolemaic system of astronomy be accepted as a basis for the union of various scientific schools, neverthless, it is a hopeful sign that these dignitaries have been constrained by what is taking place in the world to commit themselves in principle to the reunion of Christendom. His Holiness, Leo XIII., seems to be ingenuously oblivious to the incongruity involved in his encyclical (1893) on this theme, when in the closing paragraphs he offers certain "indulgences," overlooking the fact that "indulgences" were responsible at the first for the secession from the Roman Church. But not only have eminent ecclesiastics spoken, they and others have written on this

[1] "Stray Thoughts of a Lifetime," by Dr. J. Pulsford, p. 220.

momentous topic.[1] Magazine articles have been produced in abundance, newspaper controversies have been frequent, sermons and pamphlets have multiplied like the leaves, and the question of Christian union has been presented in almost every light, clear and obscure, and from every conceivable angle. And not satisfied with writings, the friends of the cause have organized Evangelical Alliances, unity clubs, Young Men's Christian Associations, federations of churches, undenominational evangelistic services, non-sectarian fraternities, Endeavor societies, and different kinds of benevolent enterprises. These movements indicate a scarcely disguised impatience with the barriers that separate one denomination from the other, and a determination to ignore them or find a way through them to the realization of that brotherhood which is symbolized in the sacrament, of whose significance the poet sings:

> The Holy Supper is kept indeed,
> In whatso we share with another's need:
> Not what we give, but what we share—
> For the gift without the giver is bare;
> Who gives himself with his alms feeds three—
> Himself, his hungering neighbor, and Me."

There is a growing impression in the Protestant world that sectarianism obscures this sacred meaning, and that its sweetness will never be fully experienced until

[1] Among the many books dealing with the subject may be mentioned "*Pax Vobiscum*," Bamberg, 1863; "An *Eirenicon*," Pusey's contribution, London, 1865; Messner's "*Neue Evang.*," 1866, and Döllinger's "Reunion of the Churches," Munich, 1871; but to do justice to the literature created by its discussion would demand another volume of no small dimensions.

sectarian lines have been rendered indistinct. Consequently, among the laity there is a widespread indifference to denominational restraints, witnessed by the ease with which membership is now transferred from one church to another, and the positive dislike of what is known as denominational sermons. Official Boards and clergymen may blind themselves to the signs of the times; but just the same they indicate a weariness with divisions, and a growing scorn of unnecessary schisms. Nor is it safe to ignore the rising tide of sentiment that surges against the dikes by which one church is cut off from all the others. It must be taken into account and be dealt with intelligently, or disasters may follow. In what respects it may be unreasonable must be shown; in what regards it may be impracticable must be explained; and in what measure and by what methods its legitimate aspirations may be fulfilled must be ascertained and advocated.

The belief is cherished by some people that only a comprehensive scheme of church nationalization can effect the restoration of Christian union. But were this successful, whatever else it might be, it would not be the revival of the "primitive" union; for at the beginning bishops were not welcome at court, and the congregations of the saints, while paying tribute to Cæsar, never for a moment thought of making him their ruler. It is, however, very questionable whether the church made national would be better off than to-day when it is independent, and whether this change would succeed in arresting schisms. Judging from what we know of this method where it has been tried, we have not sufficient reason to be sanguine of its efficacy. The experiment

in New England was never satisfactory, and it was a great relief, when with the nineteenth century it was brought to a definite termination. Germany, however, nothing deterred by failures in other lands, adopted it in 1817. Under Frederic William III. the consistories of Prussia were superseded by royal commissions for the direction of ecclesiastial affairs, and he ordered his Lutheran and Calvinist subjects to unite in one fold over which he himself would be the supreme shepherd. Dogmatic standards were quietly set aside, theology was discredited, and the descendants of Luther were to become one, not on the basis of an intelligent faith, but on the foundation of a non-committal and colorless liturgy. These extreme measures went so far that a cabinet order of 1839 abolished the name of Protestant. The spiritual autocracy of the secular arm has in some respects been modified by concessions made to synods; but notwithstanding these amiable surrenders, since 1870 the emperor, lord paramount, has in reality been the pope of Germany. Think what kind of system this is by which a war-lord, like the present kaiser, becomes the head of an organization whose mission on the earth is peace. It is as though a wolf, "red in tooth and claw," were inaugurated monarch over a sheepfold. If anything were really needed to show the childishness and absurdity of the national church idea, we have it in the primacy of an imperator, who, notwithstanding his acknowledged abilities, has never given any proof of spiritual discernment.

But when in Germany the Church was subordinated to the State, the reign of schism was not brought to a close. Pastor Harms saw clearly what would inevita-

bly follow. Conviction, reason, independence could not be entirely stifled by the mandate of a king. Hence, Scheibel, Steffens, Huschke, and other prominent Lutherans revolted in 1830, and since then, so far as I can judge, sects have multiplied in Germany. At the beginning of the nineteenth century in that country only Moravians and Mennonites were conspicuous as dissenters from the main body of believers. But according to recent statistics there are now within the same nationality six thousand seven hundred and sixteen Moravians, twenty-two thousand three hundred and sixty-five Mennonites, twenty-nine thousand and seventy-four Baptists, ten thousand one hundred and forty-four Methodists, five thousand two hundred and forty-nine English and Scotch Episcopalians and Presbyterians, and six thousand four hundred and eighty-two unnamed. These communions are increasing in numbers and influence, and rationalism has not given signs of serious decline. Therefore, it is clear that nationalizing the church has not composed differences, and neither has it stimulated faith in religion. One of the strongest arguments in favor of Christian union is that which maintains its power to convince the skeptic and diminish unbelief. The reasoning is sound, and if this result has not been attained in Germany it must be because the method of union raises more doubts than it allays, and demonstrates its own faultiness by the infidelity it fosters.

And that it should operate in this manner is the most natural thing imaginable. The meaning of the word "State-Church" (*Landes-kirche*) came out of the venerable tradition which descended to all nations that once formed part of the Roman Empire, that the religion of

the sovereign is by an inevitable law the religion of his subjects. Through the Middle Ages this principle was generally accepted, and though the Reformation called it in question, it never was entirely annulled. The treaty of Westphalia, 1648, which ended the Thirty Years' War, provided the following agreement: Evangelical people under Roman Catholic rulers, and Roman Catholics under evangelical governments, shall be permitted to worship unmolested, as they did in 1624. But those who in the future go over to a religion differing from the faith of their ruler shall be wholly at his mercy, to be tolerated or to be banished from his dominions. This covenant, therefore, recognized anew the supremacy of the monarch in religion, and fastened on Christianity the monstrous assumption of paganism, that the imperator was a "*præsens Divus.*" Lucan and Lucan's uncle, Seneca, ridiculed this exaltation of rulers, like Claudius, over the gods of the empire, and the poet urged the champions of freedom to die that in Tartarus they might crush the tyrants whom Rome had adored as divinities.[1] It is not sufficient to say that the treaty of Westphalia never countenanced the worship of earthly kings, for, while it never authorized formal homage of that kind, yet when they become the dispensers of patronage, and when their thought is to be accepted as the last word on matters pertaining to the soul's highest interests, submission to such arbitrary dictation and dependence on such sovereign favor constitute the real worship, and all that goes on in cathedral or chapel service is merely empty show. Thinking men have felt this keenly. Multitudes, who have had respect for their

[1] Froude's: "*Divus Cæsar.*"

intelligence and veneration for mental honesty, have simply been driven by this paganized Christian absolutism away from Christianity. They know very well that Jesus Christ never taught anything that could be construed into a sanction for these high-handed proceedings on the part of kings; and, therefore, they concluded, if they were not to be permitted to be his disciples they would not insult their higher nature by permitting it to be the plaything of rulers and their cabinets, who were, as frequently as otherwise, flushed with wine or ambition when they were determining the fortunes of the church. And still, whenever the national idea is supreme, it tends to alienate many of the best and most thoughtful people of the land from the ancient faith. Instead of overcoming doubt, it increases doubt, and instead of harmonizing contending creeds, it only seems to impart a note of bitterness to those who are beyond the pale of government approval, and to those that are high in State favor a tone of supercilious arrogance.

Nor is this impression lessened by what we know of national churches in France and Great Britain. Napoleon was the first of the French monarchs who placed Catholics and Protestants on an equality before the law, not unifying them and making them one organization, but relating them on similar terms to the State. Prior to that, in 1787, through the efforts of Rabaut-S-Etienne, Lafayette, and their sympathizers, Louis XVI. had been induced to sign the "*Edit de Tolérance*," which granted to Protestants the right to live in France, to marry legally, and the privilege of registering births and deaths. But the revolution breaking

out, this edict was superseded by the "*Déclaration des droits de l'homme*," through which the "*Assemblée Constituante*," banished all inequality which existed between the "*religionnaires*" and the "Catholics." These changes, however, prepared the way for the famous law of Napoleon, promulgated 18th of Germinal, year X. (April 7th, 1802), by which Protestants were put on the same footing with Catholics, and their pastors drew their salaries from the public treasury. In this way the Reformed Church ceased to be a free church, and its general Synods and its old "Collogues," were suppressed. Ecclesiastical power was handed over to the "*Consistoires*," which alone could communicate with government, and very soon these passed into the keeping of the rich, and developed into a despotism. The "*Terreur blanche*," as it is called, purged the Reformed Church to some extent of this reproach, and after 1816, her affairs were in a more promising condition. But under the preaching of Robert Haldane and Charles Cook, a spiritual quickening occurred; a Bible Society was founded, 1819, and the apathy, which had come with increasing respectability to the Protestant party in the Establishment, was seriously disturbed. The liberals were aroused and protested against the revival of evangelicalism, and ultimately the men and women who had embraced it most fervently felt impelled to withdraw from the Establishment, and organize churches of their own, to be known as "Free Churches of France." Among the leaders of this movement (1848), we find the names of Count de Gasparin and Frederic Monod; and on the twentieth of August, 1849, was established the "*Union des Eglise Evangélique Libres de France*,"

founded on the gospel and on the separation of the Church from the State. At present there are thirty-six churches in the union, with twenty-two mission stations, forty-five pastors, fifteen evangelists, three thousand seven hundred and eighteen members, and about twelve thousand hearers; and to these bodies must be added the Lutherans, Baptists, and Methodists, whose numbers, however, are very inconsiderable, and they are separated from the Free Churches. During the recent jubilee of the union it was declared by Pastor Roger that the dreams of its founders had not been fulfilled. Doubtless many unforeseen difficulties have prevented their realization. But the existence of the union, with the division between the Reformed and Catholic portions of the State Church, and the continued dissensions within the Reformed Church between liberals and conservatives prove to a demonstration, whatever else government may do, by no process of nationalizing religion can it abolish sectarianism.

And the more completely the scheme is enforced, and the more consistently it is applied, the more distasteful it becomes, and the more prolific in misunderstandings and unworthy schisms. Of this the religious condition of Great Britain furnishes ample evidence. The rulers of that country in the main have evinced the strongest hostility to the political supremacy of the Church of Rome, and have adhered to the idea of a State Church. William the Conqueror (1066), while himself a strict Catholic, laid down these three rules:

First. That neither the pope, the pope's representative, nor letters from the pope, should be received in England without his leave. Second. That no meeting of church authorities should

be called on to take any action without his leave. Third. That no baron or servant of his should be expelled from the church without his leave.

In the reign of Edward III. the first statute of *Præmunire* was enacted, by which all appeals from the king's court of justice to the popes was forbidden. These underlying principles are involved in the constitution of the existing Anglican Establishment. On three important "Acts" the Reformed Church of England has been built: the Act of the Submission of the Clergy, the Act of the Supremacy of the Crown, and the Acts of Uniformity, determining belief and worship. By the first, the government of the church was withdrawn from ecclesiastical authority, except as allowed and defined by the crown and parliament. By the second, the right of the laity, as represented by national sovereignty, to rule and control the national church was established. And by the third, the doctrines and liturgy to be believed and practised were determined, from which it is as illegal to depart as it is to violate the moral code, whether the recalcitrant be presbyter, priest, or prelate.

It is evident from these enactments that no changes in the creed or prayer-book can be made without the consent of the duly appointed secular authorities, and that, consequently, a church that consents to become nationalized after this fashion yields her independence, and while professing not to be of this world, yet exalts this world, in the person of its rulers, to be her chief. How the many brilliant and devout men, whose scholarship and piety we all recognize, can endure the humiliating position of the English Establishment it is diffi-

cult to explain. Their acquiescence may simply be the result of education; or it may be accounted for by the hesitancy of the authorities to interfere with departures from the rubric, unless they are flagrant and the occasion of excesses, such as have grown out of recent Romanizing tendencies which have excited the opposition of Mr. Kensit and his followers; or it may spring from the ecclesiastical habit of preferring to leave things as they are, and not look too closely into the foundations on which they rest. But, however satisfactory the existing order may seem to be to the great mass of the English Church, there is widespread dissatisfaction beyond her borders. The parties within her own bosom, the remarkable progress of Nonconformist bodies, and the growing union between them, are proving conclusively that a national church does not and cannot abate denominationalism; but that, judging from England, it rather intensifies than lessens the evil, and that in exchanging her independence for State support she does not gain in dignity and loses much in genuine power. These facts and inferences ought to be taken into consideration by the persons who imagine that a national church in America would cure our sectarianism, and increase the vigor of evangelical faith. To accomplish the latter, we might perhaps consent to waive our objections to the former; but when there is not the least particle of evidence that so blessed a result would ensue, we should be guilty of the most extravagant folly were we to encourage a policy which has proven its total inadequacy wherever it has been enforced in the old world.

It cannot be regarded as surprising that the Roman

Church should advocate a theory of union grounded on her own claims to apostolicity and catholicity. We designate it the papal theory; and however we may dissent from it, we must admit that it has the charm of simplicity. Nothing is more logical and more complete. If the principles on which it rests are accepted by the conscience, then to reject the measure proposed by his holiness for the gathering of the divided flock in one sheepfold would be unreasonable and unjustifiable. It is altogether wrong to suppose that the popes have been without solicitude for the divisions distracting the Christian world. Pius IX. was not indifferent to the evil, and Leo XIII., among his numerous encyclicals has devoted one or more to this subject. But they all propose one and the same remedy—submission to the papacy. When the Ecumenical Council was summoned in 1869–1870, the Eastern prelates were invited, but with the proviso that they should take no part in the deliberations "till they professed the Catholic faith whole and entire"; and the Reformed Churches were permitted also to send representatives, who should be "referred to experienced men and have their difficulties solved." But in both instances absolute submission was the only condition on which the papacy would admit delegates from other Christian bodies to membership in the council. The "Dublin Review," as quoted by Oxenham in his preface to Döllinger's book, states exactly the attitude assumed by the Holy See in its imperious demands:

> The church apostolic, undivided and universal, stands alone among other religious communities, with everything to bestow, nothing to receive. She admits no right to parley with her; her

call, whether to individuals or communities, is a summons not to treat but to surrender. She sits as a judge in her own controversy, and the only plea she admits is a *Confiteor*, the only prayer she listens to a *Miserere*.

Döllinger, commenting on this spirit as revealed in the Vatican Council, does not hesitate to declare that it blights every hope of reunion even between the Greek and Latin communions. His words are:

> The great stumbling-block and real hindrance to any understanding in the eyes of all Easterns is the papacy, in the form which it has assumed according to the ultramontane theory, since the time of Gregory VII., of an absolute spiritual and temporal dominion over the whole Christian world. . . Through recent occurrences, every hope of reconciliation and future reunion has been purposely cut up by the roots. The present pope [Pio Nono] has within the last few years imposed three new articles of faith—the Immaculate Conception, the Universal Episcopate, and the Infallibility. . . In Rome the mind and temper of the Greeks and Russians was perfectly well understood. It was known that on their principles this attempt to make new dogmas could only be regarded as a crime and a blasphemy. . . To speak any longer of hopes of a future union would border on madness.[1]

And as the Curia has thus rendered affiliation with the Greek Church impossible, so it has studiously declined the advances of the Anglicans. It is well known that a society exists within the English Establishment devoted to the corporate reunion of the Church of England with the Church of Rome. Much has been done by this body in the way of removing obstacles; and the only concession it has asked from the Holy See is a recognition of the validity of Anglican priestly orders. This acknowledgment would have gone far toward

[1] "Reunion of Churches," pp. 54–56.

healing the breach; but the venerable pontiff received all approaches on the subject with quiet and not over-polite disdain. A papal bull was published, and the validity of the orders in question was unceremoniously denied. The reply came as an unexpected shock to the ritualistic party, but, like a thunder-storm, it has cleared the air. It enables the entire world to understand the precise meaning to be attached to the solicitude of the Curia for the reunion of Christendom. What in reality it has at heart is the subjugation of East and West, Greek and Protestant communions, to the authority of St. Peter's throne. If we are prepared for this, and for what this involves, outward divisions can cease immediately. If this submission, which carries with it the loss of intellectual freedom in religious matters, and which entails on us unquestioning obedience to a power that is still essentially medieval, is worth more than the enormous sacrifices it demands, then let us hasten to make it with all humility. But let us not deceive ourselves. We cannot retain the distinctive glories of Protestantism and affiliate with the Roman Church. One or the other we can have, but not both. True in every point the solemn and earnest warning of Canon Melville:

> Make peace, if you will, with papacy; receive it into your senate; shrine it in your churches; shrine it in your hearts. But be ye certain, as certain as that there is a heaven above you and a God over you, that the popery thus honored and embraced is the very popery that was loathed and degraded by the holiest of your fathers; the same in haughtiness, the same in intolerance, which lorded it over kings, assumed the prerogative of Deity, crushed human liberty, and slew the saints of God.[1]

[1] "Secret History of Oxford Movement," Chapter X.

The possibility of re-union on the terms of the Holy See can hardly be seriously entertained by the most visionary enthusiast. Russia, with her increasing population and growing political importance, will never consent in this manner to discredit her church and her patriarchates; and it surpasses belief to suppose that Protestants would, after four centuries of glorious history, be willing to risk the fruits of their struggle in the keeping of their unwavering antagonist, particularly when they are confronted by the Vatican Decrees, and the famous encyclical of Pio Nono condemning freedom of thought and the liberty of the press. But more than this, the honest scholarship of the world can never consent to subscribe to recent papal assumptions as either scriptural or historical. It is too much to expect that informed and conscientious men will deliberately do violence to the highest and most unanswerable evidence. The doctrine of infallibility as now maintained at Rome is a new doctrine, and when it was suggested as a matter of opinion in earlier times, it never succeeded in securing the allegiance of the church. A little over a hundred years ago, as though in anticipation of what was to be the crowning innovation of the Vatican Council, an anonymous writer issued a book in England, an "*Eirenicon*," similar to the volume published later by Dr. Pusey, entitled "Essay toward a Proposal for Catholic Communion,"[1] in which is given in condensed form the argument against the extravagant pretensions of the supreme pontiff. This unknown author in the following brief but powerful sentences sums up the evidence:

[1] Printed in London, 1781.

Having found, upon strict examination, that the church in communion with the See of Rome requires no assent to such a papal infallibility ; That it is not so much as mentioned in the definition of the Council of Florence, in which the controversy of the papal authority and prerogative was professedly and fully discussed ; That it is not in the formula of faith, set forth by Pope Pius IV. collected out of the Council of Trent, and of which all promoted to church dignities are obliged to make a solemn profession ; That it is not proposed to such as are admitted members into that communion ; That it has no place either in their catechism *ad Parochos*, nor in other catechisms, which are for the general instruction of the people; having found likewise that Bellarmin (*l. de Rom. Pont. c. II.*) owns five eminent doctors positively denying the infallibility of the pope, without being censured by their church for such their tenets ; That the famous Launoius reckons up twelve universities, Bononia, Pavia, Sienna in Italy, Louvain in Belgia, Cologne in Germany, Vienna in Austria, Cracow in Poland, Anjou, Orleans, Toulouse, and Paris in France ; and, besides these numerous bodies, seven and fifty single writers, among which are many eminent bishops, archbishops, and cardinals, *viz*, seventeen of the Prussian school, three of the Spanish, one of Oxford, five Germans, and no less than one-and-thirty in Italy alone, all professedly writing against this infallibility of the pope, without any censure passed against them from that church ; having found, I say, this, it seems evident from hence, that this papal infallibility is no term of communion with that church ; that it is no more than a matter of opinion, and not of faith.

This array of facts has never been discredited ; and yet with sublime assurance we are called on to put an end to schism by professing to believe as true what we know, and what they who propose the dishonorable terms know, to be an absolute and elaborate fiction. Were there so little principle in the Christian community as the acceptance of this falsehood would reveal, the union secured would be a disgrace, and in the na-

ture of things would debauch the moral sense of all parties to it, and could only end in fresh alienations and ultimate disintegration. In it, therefore, there is no hope, but only shame and all the dissonances and degradations that spring from connivance with deception.

Neither can we expect success from another movement which has developed of late, by which it is hoped to suppress denominationalism through the progressive Catholicizing of Protestant churches. This plan does not necessarily involve papal supremacy, though not inconsistent with it, but contemplates union through the adoption of the ancient creeds—the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian—the observance of a common ritual, and the recognition of what is called the historic episcopate. On this subject Professor Adolf Harnack has written quite freely of late. He says:

> The chief enemy to-day is not political Catholicism of "Ultramontanism," although that is a tendency which never ceases to be dangerous. It is a Catholicism as a religion and an ecclesiastical spirit which threatens us, it is clericalism and ritualism, the alluring union of exalted piety and solemn secularity, and the substitution for religion of obedience. This is the spirit that is knocking at the doors of the Protestant churches in Germany—I fear also in England—and is demanding admittance. It has mighty allies. All those who in their hearts are indifferent to religion are its secret friends. In their view, if religion and church are to continue to exist at all, it is the Catholic form of them which is still the most tolerable and the most rational.[1]

This scheme relies in no small measure on the fascination which the word catholic possesses for many devout and mystical minds—a word that is not scrip-

[1] "Thoughts on Protestantism," Preface.

tural, that does not occur either in the LXX.—the Greek version of the Old Testament—or in the New, and only came into gradual use in the second century. While since its employment many precious memories have connected themselves with it, there are others more numerous, far from gracious or beautiful, that should incline us to regard it with only moderate enthusiasm. What is always more important than the name is the thing that it represents. The title does not always assure possession of the substance. Thus, mark the difference between Newman's estimate of the Lord's Supper and Tennyson's, both claiming to be Catholics. Newman writes :

> I could attend masses forever and not be tired. . . It is not the invocation, but, if I dare use the word, the evocation of the Eternal. He becomes present on the altar in flesh and blood, before whom angels bow and tremble.

But the son of the poet gives this impressive account of what occurred three months before his father's death :

> Dr. Merriman administered the sacrament to all in my father's study. The service was very solemn. Before he took of the communion he quoted his own words put into Cranmer's mouth :
>
> It is but a communion, not a mass ;
> No sacrifice, but a life-giving feast ;
>
> impressing upon the rector that he could not partake of it at all unless it were administered in that sense.

If these two irreconcilable conceptions could struggle together, like Jacob and Esau, in the womb of one church, is it not the most fantastic of dreams to imagine that they would consent to abide in harmony beneath

the same ecclesiastical tent? No; sooner or later, the history of the two brothers would be repeated. Schism would again occur. There are insuperable difficulties in the way of the Catholicizing programme. These may easily be discerned by those readers who recall what has been said in this volume on the Oxford movement. But superadded to these is one that is never taken into account by the ritualistic party, namely, the strength of spiritual independency which has grown and struck its roots down deep in humanity since the days of the Reformation. Before the endeavors described by Harnack can hope to succeed, this principle, which now runs through the mental habits and institutions of our age, must lose its power. It cannot be ignored by any scheme that seeks to harmonize the differences of men. If passed by and dealt with as though it were a fiction, it would only in the end occasion the most widespread misunderstanding and confusion. There would be an ultimate reaction, and the artificial and superficial union would be torn to pieces.

Of the significance of this independency Döllinger, with his usual penetration, has written sagaciously, and though he is not altogether accurate in tracing its rise to Cromwell, yet, being a Catholic, his reflections are of more than ordinary value. He thus expresses himself in a singular lecture on the "Founders of Religion":

> I am much tempted to reckon among the founders of religion—although certainly not in the ordinary sense—another of England's rulers, the Protector Cromwell, a man who surpassed many kings in power as well as in political insight and serious religious conviction. He was not the founder of any particular church or denomination, but became a member of a sect with which he felt

himself particularly in sympathy—that of the Independents. Yet he was the first among the mighty men of the world to set up one special religious principle, and to enforce it as far as in him lay; a principle which, in opposition to the great historical churches and to Islam, contained the germs of a distinct religion—the principle of liberty of conscience, and the repudiation of religious coercion. It must be clearly understood how great the gulf is which divides the holders of this principle from those who reject it, both in faith and morals. He who is convinced that right and duty require him to coerce other people into a life of falsehood, hypocrisy, and habitual dissimulation,—the inevitable consequence of a system of religious intolerance,—belongs to an essentially different religion from one who recognizes in the inviolability of conscience a human right guaranteed by religion itself, and has different notions of God, of man's relation to God, and of man's obligations to his fellows. It was in those days no insignificant thing that the ruler of a powerful kingdom should proclaim the new doctrine, which, nevertheless, has required the growth of a century and a half in public opinion to become strong enough to command even the acquiescence of its still numerous opponents. The Evangelical Alliance, which now embraces two continents, and has happily realized a principle of agreement between churches formerly unknown or held to be impossible, may well regard Cromwell as its prophet and preparatory founder. Yet it is only of this one doctrine that Cromwell can be called the prophet, for he adhered upon all other points to the tenets of the Independents; yet the doctrine of liberty of conscience has struck deeper into the course of events, and has had a larger share in the development of modern religious feeling, than a dozen dogmas sprung from theological schools, that affect merely the intellect and not the soul—that is, the will—of the believer. The Constitution of the United States of America has been built up upon Cromwell's doctrine; and there is every prospect that, as one of the great powers of the world, it will leave its mark upon the future of mankind.

Who is there who does not perceive in this utterance, not only the reef on which all Catholicizing schemes

must be wrecked, but the one great principle which must be honored by every school or party that attempts the reunion of Christendom?

To any one at all familiar with the teachings of the New Testament it will be evident that none of these proposed elaborate and highly articulated consolidations corresponds in the least degree with its ideal of Christian union. In no instance do we derive from them a suggestion of the primitive fellowship that preserved the early disciples, notwithstanding occasional differences, in an apparent oneness. Of the things on which stress is now laid as conducive to unification, such as hierarchies, creeds, and a common ritual, not a trace is to be found. The greatest freedom prevailed throughout the apostolic age in the order and practices of the churches. They had no authorized and accepted theology. "At the beginning there was only prophecy and spiritual teaching. The man who, in the name of religion, delivered himself of a truth which he had perceived, or communicated a piece of religious admonition, did so at the instigation of the Spirit." They had no complicated rubric; but were simply encouraged when they met to sing psalms, to offer prayer, to remember the poor saints, and to keep the feast of love. Every one disavowed the right to exercise lordship over the faith of others. They reasoned one with another, and did not coerce. Apostles did not adopt the high, imperious tone of infallibility, but spoke or wrote with the most gentle moderation and consideration. Moreover, for the sake of avoiding schism, they forbore to enjoin on the Gentile converts a rite which they themselves had been taught to prize, but sent to Antioch for

answer to questions that had been brought to the church at Jerusalem, this decision: "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay upon you no greater thing than these necessary things"—at once suggesting that only essentials were then regarded as conditions of union.

In those days, also, it was not considered indispensable for one apostle to derive his authority from another. Paul was called to the office by Christ, and was anointed by the Holy Spirit, and not by Peter, and never looked on Peter as superior to himself, but even "resisted him to the face because he stood condemned." But these early religious communities, while holding intercourse with one another and co-operating with each other, were not free from discordant elements and divisive counsels. If we are to believe the critics, there was a Jewish party among the disciples, and traces of a Petrine church and then of a Pauline church. Misunderstanding arose, and partisan disputes were not unknown; but no one church, say at Jerusalem or Rome, set itself up as being the custodian of the truth and as being absolutely right, while all the rest were schismatical. The followers of our Lord argued together, admonished and reproved, but they never for a moment imagined that they were members of different denominations. They always tried to be fraternal in their spirit and federative in their work. And when we recall the character of their disputations, and then think of the prayer our Lord breathed for unity, we cannot suppose that he had in view the acceptance of a common ritual and obedience to a common ecclesiastical chief, but rather, and only, the cultivation of brotherhood, mutual

forbearance, gracious tolerance, broad-minded and comprehensive charity, without which co-operative activity is next to impossible, and for which there was great need in the apostolic era, as there has been ever since.[1]

In these few sentences I have given a sketch of primitive Christian union, which has the approval of the most candid and learned among historians, and which should serve as a model toward whose realization in the twentieth century we should devote our energies. Its fulfillment would give to the world what was called in medieval times the "Johannean Church." And such a church in my opinion would very speedily conquer the world. That the Catholic conception of union is not indispensable to the triumphs of the Cross, has been proven by the wonders wrought when it has not been adopted. Impressed by what has been done, one who does not always manifest sympathy with Nonconformity writes:

> Certainly the triumphs of modern Christianity in the ethical province more than compensate for any loss of corporate cohesion. Working through ecclesiastical organizations of most varied character, its spirit has here achieved victories which the ages of organic unity never attempted. The abolition of slavery—the countless institutions for raising the moral and social condition of the working classes—the keen realization of the sanctity of human life—the universal deprecation of needless cruelties in war and in police—these are but a few instances of the advance of Christian civilization.[2]

These successes demonstrate that we have no need for the Catholicizing of Christendom for the purpose of

[1] See Hatch on "Organization of Early Churches"; also Ramsay on "The Church in the Roman Empire."

[2] Jennings, "Manual Church History," p. 232

bringing in the everlasting reign of peace and righteousness.

If so much could be accomplished by communities separated from each other, at times struggling for supremacy, often evincing a sectarian spirit, how much more would be achieved and speedily, if this spirit were entirely eliminated, if denominational names were laid aside, if the various communions always consulted together and worked together, and if they were willing, to pull down and lay aside every barrier that impeded the fullest co-operation? Judging from what has been done without it, this co-ordination would speedily complete the triumph of the Cross. But it may be urged that it would still be better, and success more immediate, if every separate organization were merged in one vast organic whole, so that Christendom could move forward to the great battle of the future in close columns. And yet experience has recently been teaching the armies of earth "that an attack in open order is, under certain circumstances, particularly effective." This was demonstrated repeatedly in the South African war. And these tactics may be just as successful in religion, provided always, that the soldiers in open order do not fire on each other, or spend their time in criticising each other's accoutrements and mode of advance. Indeed, they have proven wonderfully effective, even when the men have spent ammunition against one another, and have questioned each other's right to be in the fight at all. But were they in perfect agreement, carefully sustaining each other, never getting in each other's way, and acting together according to a concerted plan, in my judgment the result would be decisive and overwhelming.

The Protestants alone pursuing this mode of warfare would very soon conquer the world for Christ; and while the work would be greatly facilitated by the co-operation of the Greek and Roman hierarchies, even without their close columns the issue would not long be doubtful.

To bring about this efficient and harmonious fusion of forces, and thus to restore primitive Christian union, demands that the fraternal spirit be cultivated and the various Christian churches be federated. And it is a source of gratification and gratitude, that these two processes have been at work during the last quarter of the nineteenth century and have made considerable headway. A far better feeling exists between the once estranged denominations—a feeling of amity and mutual appreciation—than was common a few years ago. The intense individualism of such writers as Vinet and Channing has had its day, and the diseased introspection and self-absorption revealed in Amiel and Senancours are rapidly disappearing in the limbo of lost causes. It may be said of every man who is a religious egoist or recluse, who is a hermit by nature, though mingling with the world, what Sainte-Beuve said of Obermann: "He is the type of the dumb and abortive genius, full of the spring of sensibility wasted upon desert sands, of the hail-smitten harvest which never matures its gold." Protestants are beginning to appreciate the significance of this criticism. Individualism is on the decline among them, and they find themselves sympathizing with Jovinian, who, though counted a heretic by Augustine and Jerome, gave utterance to these very orthodox sentiments:

There is but one divine element of life, which all believers share in common; but one fellowship with Christ, which proceeds from faith in him; but one new birth. All who possess this in common with each other have the same calling, the same dignity, the same heavenly blessings; the diversity of outward circumstances creating no difference in this respect.

There being this spiritual solidarity, comparable to the oneness of the ocean, whose wind-blown waves do not disturb the serene harmony of the fathomless depths, bitterness, hatred, partisanship, and every unbrotherly feeling should be excluded. In proportion as this is apprehended—and it is understood better and felt more to-day than formerly—a sense of kinship with all Christians, whatever their denominational badge, becomes more clearly defined and real. The old censorious spirit gives way, and the disposition to impute unworthy motives to every one who differs from another is swallowed up in the generous charity that is not puffed up and thinketh no evil.

In the early annals of American Christianity there is an incident which called forth a letter which might have been a prophecy of what has fallen out in the last days of the nineteenth century. Governor Endicott, who with his much-suffering little colony had settled at Salem, was compelled by the prevalence of sickness to request from Governor Bradford, of Plymouth, the services of a physician, Dr. Samuel Fuller. These two colonies, and their equally worthy governors, were not in accord on religious subjects, and the extent of the division had been magnified by evil-disposed persons. But whatever of misunderstanding and alienation existed, the Separatist deacon, "the beloved physician,"

by his unselfish labors largely overcame and effaced. This is made evident from a passage taken from the letter of Governor Endicott to Governor Bradford in acknowledgment of his courteous assistance. It bears date May 11, 1629, and the extract is as follows:

> It is a thing not usual that servants to one Master and of the same household should be strangers. I assure you I desire it not; nay, to speak more plainly, I cannot be so to you. God's people are marked with one and the same seal, and have, for the main, one and the same heart, guided by one and the same spirit of truth, and where this is there can be no discord—nay, here must needs be sweet harmony. The same request with you I make unto the Lord, that we may as Christian brethren be united by a heavenly and unfeigned love, bending all our hearts and forces in furthering a work beyond our strength, with reverence and fear fastening our eyes always on Him that only is able to direct and prosper all our days.

We cannot but rejoice in this evidence of fraternal regard in those relatively dark ages, all the more brilliant because of its exceptional character; and we much more rejoice that now, after much internecine warfare, this passage from the governor's letter may be taken as embodying the new creed of the Protestant world.

Nearly all, if not all, profess it; and while it may not yet be continuously and consistently practised by all, there is a deepening sense of its authority manifested everywhere, and endeavors, not unworthy of the object, to exemplify it in interdenominational relations. In England there is an improvement in the attitude of many low and broad Church Anglicans toward Nonconformists. Several irritating discriminations, and some of them on the face as unreasonable as they are exas-

perating, such as the fiction of consecrated ground in which the body of a Dissenter may not be interred, and which called forth the justly indignant protest of Dr. Joseph Parker, unfortunately have survived to the great injury of amicable feelings. Yet, notwithstanding these drawbacks, substantial gain has been made, and mutual respect and reciprocal sentiments of appreciation, have secured perceptible advance. Occasionally, even, it is now observable that Romanists and Protestants think more highly of each other than formerly, and are more willing to recognize what is good in their respective communions. They are sometimes found working together side by side for the public welfare, and have been known to contribute money for the furtherance of each other's enterprises, as illustrated by Mr. Dwight L. Moody assisting the Catholics to erect a church at Northfield. Thus in many ways the spirit of fraternity has grown, grown all over the world and in the majority of churches. The gracious tide is still rising, though it is some distance yet from being at the full. But as it increases, how many ugly sectarian marshes are hidden from the sight, how many angular, jagged reefs of bigotry are submerged from view, and with how much more ease and safety can the diverse denominations sail side by side and exchange greetings of love and peace.

As it is our privilege and obligation to do what we can for the increase of fraternity, we should be equally concerned to give it practical efficiency through the federative activity of the churches. Federation in England, while yet in the experimental stage, has thus far worked smoothly, and given proof of its value

as a remedy for sectarianism. The Nonconformist churches there have entered into a kind of "solemn league and covenant," and are combining for the evangelization of Great Britain. In the United States some steps have already been taken, notably in New York, for the application of this new departure to the needs of divided Christendom. If it is everywhere energetically pushed, and if the great denominations will only heartily adopt its measures, the time cannot be far distant when primitive Christian union shall be restored to bless the world. For, be it remembered, when Pliny wrote to Trajan in the early part of the second century, when there was no visible head to the church, as the last of the apostles had ended his ministry, and when there was no recognized seat of authority, for Jerusalem was desolate and Rome had not been accorded the primacy; when the "Teaching of the Twelve" had been penned, and before Ignatius had commenced his progress, more than royal in its dignity, from Antioch to martyrdom at Rome; the pro-consul considered the Christian people throughout the empire as one, and he in common with others was deeply impressed by the victorious power of this manifest unity. Federation, animated by the spirit of fraternity, comes nearer to this ancient pattern of union than any of the clamorous demands for a single corporate body, with authority concentrated in a Curia, and set on realizing a dreary, monotonous uniformity.

What brotherhood begins I am sure united labor must continue and perfect. Various methods have been tried and have been found wanting, and only this last one seems to remain. Doctrinal subscrip-

tion has been proposed, but has not been found practical. Herder writes:

> Dogmas separate and embitter, but religion unites. Words and syllables are deified; the intoxication lasts awhile, then it subsides, and nothing remains but the sharp scaffolding. But religion is a living fountain; you may dam it up and choke it, but it will break forth once more from its depths, again purifying strengthening, and vitalizing itself.

And as creeds fail, so rubrics have not succeeded, although they may have been rendered conspicuous by red letters. Humanity resists intellectual uniformity, and uniformity in discipline and forms of worship. Work, however, seems to appeal to all alike, and when two or more are engaged in doing the same thing, it becomes much easier for them finally to believe the same thing. And herein lies the special value of Christian Endeavor movements, and kindred alliances, such as the Young Men's Christian Association, and the Women's Christian Association likewise. These bodies undertake to do something. They are organized for special activities. Denominational issues they ignore. They discuss neither baptism nor apostolic succession, neither congregational polity nor prelacy. All irritating and divisive themes are put aside, and they engage in some gracious ministry on behalf of others. And as they see the wilderness retreating before their joint endeavors, they find it not so hard as they imagined to think the same thought and breathe the same prayer. Work is the great unifier. And could we only persuade Catholic and Protestant, Unitarian and Trinitarian, to join hands and labor side by side with each other, and not against each other, there would not only be better

feeling everywhere, but there would be a gradual harmonizing of beliefs. For, after all, work is the true test of a creed. As it is more or less the expression of the heart's conviction, when several are represented in a common endeavor, it is hard to resist the conclusion, that the one which is the most completely and continuously successful must have back of it the authority of truth. Let all Christians, then, federate their churches, and let them press forward to conquer the world for Christ, and by and by, after the smoke of successful battle shall clear away, they probably will perceive that the creeds which now seem irreconcilably opposed, have in them much in common, and not enough of difference to warrant the perpetuation of sectarian names.

The venerable and honored George Jacob Holyoake has recently been blessed with a most entrancing vision; and as far as it anticipates the future of Christianity others are entitled to share its sweet anticipations of universal concord. He writes:

Once, like Bunyan, I dreamed a dream. Everybody who does it mentions Bunyan as a sort of apology for doing it. In my dream, magnates of religion of all denominations were assembled on a great platform, and a goodly number of leaders of a different way of thinking. The utmost geniality and concord reigned between them. Not concord of faith but of friendliness—heretofore non-existent through differences of conviction. Personal estrangement no longer existed. Each regarded the other as a conscientious seeker after truth. No one abandoned what Edward Miall used to describe as his "Dissidence of Dissent." Each pursued his own ideal—advocated it and defended it, if necessary. There was no concealment, no concession, no compromise, no apology for honest difference of opinion. Nor was there any indignation or distrust of others, on account of dissentient convictions. As co-operation, with all its distinctions, stands upon its own

merits and takes its own independent place in the industry and commerce of the world—religion and all its varieties, had agreed to stand upon its own particular form of truths, trusting to the validity of its arguments for its extension. When I left the assembly the outer world seemed brighter than I had known it. There was the glow of a new light in the streets. When I awoke the pleasant sense remained and I thought how enchanted the New Year would seem, should such a light be diffused over it.

The dreamer may retain his happy sensations, for not only the new year, but the new century, begins with proofs that this spirit is growing. Babu Keshub Chunder Sen, a Hindu preacher of theism, was welcomed to London by a distinguished gathering, where a Unitarian minister, a Jewish rabbi, an eminent dignitary of the Establishment, and the Foreign Secretary of the London Missionary Society united to do him honor. Christians have learned to meet in amity and kindness, and though divided by conflicting opinions, to treat each other as honest and as worthy of respect and confidence. "The glow of this light" is in many of our churches, and sheds its radiance in an untold number of hearts. Yes, the dream in its essential features is at least partially fulfilled. Hands are not only clasped over the chasm, but the chasm itself is closing up. What remains to be accomplished, though delayed, cannot fail to issue gloriously. Christianity must fulfill its destiny, and in doing so, and in preparing for its final conflict with evil, union will be attained, not, perhaps, in the majesty of a single body, like the sun, but in the unity of the solemn stars, which without noise or conflict pursue their way, illumine each other's paths, and shed their blended light upon the darkness.

X

THE NATIONS AND RELIGION

There is the moral of all human tales ;
'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past ;
First Freedom, and then Glory—when that fails,
Wealth, Vice, Corruption—Barbarism at last.
And History, with all her volumes vast,
Hath but one page : 'tis better written here
Where gorgeous tyranny hath thus amassed
All treasures, all delights that eye or ear,
Heart, soul could seek, tongue ask.

—*Byron*

Careless seems the Great Avenger ; History's pages but record
One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt all systems and the Word ;
Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne—
Yet that scaffold sways the Future, and behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own.

—*Lowell.*

X

THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY ON A HUNDRED YEARS OF HISTORY

CHARLES SUMNER begins one of his scholarly lectures with these words:

> History is sometimes called a gallery, where are exhibited scenes, events, and characters of the past. It may also be called the world's great charnel-house, where are gathered coffins, dead men's bones, and all the uncleanness of years that have fled. Thus is it both an example and a warning to mankind.[1]

And Christian history is no exception to this enlightened estimate. Many things that have taken place since the ascension of our Lord, sanctioned by his followers, though condemned by his teachings and Spirit, have been characterized by deceit and corruption, and have retarded the march of human progress. Religion is never benefited by apologies and courtly exonerations from blame, when her name has been dragged in the mire by her degenerate children. If she has been put in the wrong, and if her fair fame has been blackened, let the wrong be distinctly pointed out and denounced; for only in this way can she be relieved of suspected complicity with the guilt of her misguided adherents. If, occasionally, she has been converted into a whited sepulchre to satisfy the unnatural cravings of her ghoulish devotees, it is due to mankind that this perversion be held up to scorn and shame. In this manner her

[1] "White Slavery in Barbary States."

future may be guarded from similar calamitous relapses, and her past lamentable shortcomings be made to serve as beacon-lights of faithful warning.

But while in the annals of Christianity there is much to deplore, there is far more to inspire and delight. She has, indeed, supplied the world with a picture gallery, where heroic figures and battle paintings tell a story of unequaled devotion and beneficence. And the more thoroughly it is inspected and studied, the more profound becomes the impression that Christianity is central to the development of the race, and has had much to do in determining its aims and aspirations. Hegel has taught that history is the progressive self-realization of a universal spirit in harmony with a general law; while Schopenhauer, at the other extreme, has maintained that there is no advance whatever, but only a kaleidoscopic succession of crimes and rascalities. Neither philosopher may be entitled to our unqualified assent, but assuredly the pessimist advocates what is utterly repugnant to reason. Lately an interesting volume has appeared which covers this field of inquiry, and its author, Mr. Beattie Crozier, approaching the subject unbiased by religious predilections, perceives in history an orderly plan and development, and is impressed by "the spectacle of so many generations of human souls all moving unconsciously toward a predestined end"; and he is therefore led to believe in "a stupendous and over-arching supernaturalism everywhere enfolding and pervading the world and its affairs, and giving scope and exercise to all that is properly religious in thought and feeling."[1] Of this

[1] "The History of Intellectual Development."

supernaturalism Christianity is the symbol and the token, through whose offices and ministries it principally, though not exclusively, trains the race, and leads the generations onward to their destined goal. Mr. Mallock somewhere says: "In the infinite hush of space there is but one sound—the tides of human history, like the moaning of the homeless sea." But humanity is not homeless, like the sea. The faith proclaimed by Christ has revealed the bourne and haven, and is itself drawing the "tides" toward the peaceful harbor where the "moaning" shall be hushed forever.

We have already admitted that Christianity has been always more or less affected by its earthly surroundings, by the philosophies and the type of culture prevalent among, and the social and political institutions accepted by, a people. The world has acted on religion from without, modifying its temper, influencing its theology, and supplying it with a medium of expression varying with the peculiar characteristics of the nations submitting to its authority. Thus, writes Schlegel:

> His inborn melancholy and profoundness of feeling led the Egyptian as a hermit into the wildest deserts. The Greeks brought to religious subjects the dialectical acuteness so peculiar to them, and early enough also the contentiousness connected therewith. The Romans, of a more practical turn of mind, organized the ritual requisite for the Christian mysteries with becoming dignity, and instituted a most beautiful ceremonial, and, as every society requires well-defined laws, they drew up with sagacity the rules of life necessary for the larger and smaller ecclesiastical and Christian societies. The Germans, lastly, fought like true knights for the Christian Faith, when once they had embraced it, against its fanatical enemies. Moreover, instead of severing Christianity

from life, as if care for eternity were a thing apart, they, with a full, heartfelt sentiment of the priceless treasure they had acquired, gave a Christian organization to their whole domestic and public life, referring it to and basing it on the church.[1]

In Great Britain, in Russia, and in the United States, religion reflects the peculiar genius and pursuits of the people, that is, it has been more or less Russianized, and Anglicanized, and Americanized. The national type, the national tastes, and the national way of doing things, are seen in forms of service, in methods of preaching, and in that indescribable air or manner which we associate with different races as the distinctive sign of their individuality. In this sense, every country has a national church; and more than that, every civilization its own peculiar spiritual counterpart.

But the process is not a one-sided process. As we might have supposed, if "the earth helps the woman," to use scriptural imagery, the woman helps the earth. There is action and reaction; there is mutual interchange; there is the world influencing the church, and then there is the church overcoming and subduing the world. And it is by this reciprocal action, with the spiritual gradually attaining the ascendency, that the final harmony between the temporal and the eternal will be effected, and the ideal of a social life informed and inspired by the divine be fully realized. Therefore, in history we have Christianity disclosed as a mighty force acting on society at almost every point, tempering its policies, refining its tastes, checking its passions, quickening its intelligence, purifying its ambitions. Hence, a brilliant writer has said:

[1] "Lectures on Modern History," p. 82.

Christianity was the electric spark which first roused the warlike nations of the North, rendered them susceptible of a higher civilization, stamped the peculiar character, and founded the political institutions of modern nations, which have sprung out of such heterogeneous elements. And we may add, Christianity was the connecting power which linked together the great community of European nations, not only in the moral and political relations of life, but in science and modes of thinking. The church was like the all-embracing vault of heaven, beneath whose kindly shelter those warlike nations began to settle in peace, and gradually to frame their laws and institutions. Even the office of instruction, the heritage of ancient knowledge, the promotion of science, and of all that tended to advance the progress of the human mind, devolved to the care of the church, and were exclusively confined to the Christian schools.[1]

Even if every statement contained in this tribute cannot be fully sustained, still the principle involved must be accepted as true. The history of nineteen centuries reveals the imprint of Christianity; and where the type of Christianity has been pure, simple, and in harmony with the spirit of Jesus, its influence has been wholly advantageous; but where its type has been more or less arrogant, worldly, and despotic, to that extent its yoke has proven a questionable good, if not an unquestionable evil. In common with the majority of students I regard its total effect on the course of history as beneficial. But of its power there can be no debate. Whether conferring, in accord with its essential genius, unalloyed blessings, or contributing, through its perversion, woes and wrongs to the already afflicted race, still its imperial might has been continually manifested. Whatever else it may at times have been, it has never been impotent.

[1] Schlegel's "Philosophy of History," p. 342.

Occasionally some intrepid soul now declares that it has fallen into decay, that its vigor has declined, and that the nations have really nothing to hope for or to fear from its power. And yet, with what solicitude do the great monarchies of Europe study every move of the papacy, and with what apprehensions do they regard every sign of its encroachment on their authority! How eagerly politicians court its approval in America, and lend themselves to its assumptions in the far-off archipelago! With what intense interest is the relation of the Greek Church to the Russian government studied by all who perceive that in the future a vast portion of the earth may become Cossack; and with what bewildered surprise do they learn that its sway over tsar and people is more absolute than had been supposed possible! Moreover, with what concern the "Nonconformist conscience" is contemplated in Great Britain by those who are meditating some act hostile to the public good or the national honor. No; whether for weal or woe, the power of Christianity is still a momentous fact. Men may gird at it, they may mock it, they may flout it, and they may deny it in what terms they please; but, nevertheless, kings and princes, statesmen and publicists, and every one who has to do with large affairs, are compelled to take it into account in their plans and dealings.

In what directions and to what extent this power has been exercised on the last hundred years of history, it is our purpose to investigate. And the inquiry may prove helpful in more ways than one. It will not only enable us to perceive the important part played by Christianity in the world-movements of the century,

but it will assist us to understand her relationship to far-reaching events, whose end is not yet, and will, I think, convince us that she is still the most gigantic and unconquerable force on the earth to-day. Much that I am to describe may evoke criticism or condemnation, but more will, I am sure, awaken gratitude and satisfaction, and carry with it the conviction that Christianity, whatever may have been her errors and her unjustifiable alliances and complications, holds in her hand the destiny of mankind, and must in the end shape that destiny in harmony with her vocation as the saviour of men and nations.

Many beneficial changes accomplished during the nineteenth century, may, in a very large degree, be attributed to the Christian spirit, which throughout this period has been striving to emancipate itself from ecclesiastical conservatism and prejudice, and from the restraints of prudential church officialism. It has been an era of reform. There is not a government in Europe where the name of Jesus is honored, whatever may be its present deflection from integrity, that is not morally far in advance of its predecessor a hundred years ago. Civil service has made immense strides, and life and property were never more secure. Abuses have been remedied, cruelties have been suppressed, irritating exactions have been annulled, the franchise has been extended, and the area of human freedom has been enlarged. The United States and Mexico, in varying measure, have shared in these great improvements, and there are no nations that excel them in their endeavors to-day to promote the welfare of the people by schools, sanitation, and efficient police surveillance. That they

and other States are still far from perfection, and drift into evil ways and countenance ruinous policies, we do not deny; but, remember, we are comparing them with earlier stages of civil administrations, and not with the ideal condition toward which they are journeying, and from which they are yet a long way off. "Reform" continues to be the cry; and when its origin is sought, it is found to be the first-born of that spirit which in Telemachus flamed out irresistibly against gladiatorial exhibitions, and which in Ambrose asserted the rights of humanity against the Emperor Theodosius, and which achieved its most notable triumph in the abrogation of chattel slavery. That in this divine event other forces met, some of them political and others purely revolutionary, is not to be questioned; but, nevertheless, it is impossible to account for it on the supposition that these alone, and quite apart from religion, had to do with the initiative and progress. Given the Gospels, with their constant protest against human degradation and their reiterated affirmation of brotherhood, read in numerous churches, through countless generations, and there could hardly have failed to be evolved intense antagonism against slavery; and unless this is taken into consideration, no explanation of the abolition crusade is satisfactory. But while this wonderful movement sprang primarily from this source, various were the allies that hastened its success, and which transferred it from the retired, quiet domain of ordinary philanthropy to that of political and military activity. And thus the Christian spirit in its detestation of bondage became in modern times historical and the maker of history.

On July 25, 1816, Lord Exmouth sailed with a magnificent English fleet to reduce Algiers, and put an end forever to white slavery in the Barbary States. He was accompanied by Admiral Van Capellan, of the Dutch navy, with five frigates. His great work was finished on August 30th, and by the authority of the Prince Regent, Christian slavery was abolished, all slaves were set at liberty, and the moneys that had been received during a year of time for the redemption of slaves were restored. Thus was brought to a close one of the most shameful oppressions that for ages had practically defied the arms of Europe. Various expeditions had been undertaken against this savage and piratical power:— one under Cardinal Ximenes, in 1509, another directed by Charles V., in 1535, in both of which successes were achieved; and yet another in 1541, when the emperor and his fleet were driven back by a terrible tempest to the coast of Spain. England likewise attempted to subdue these stubborn tyrants at different times; and the United States brought them to terms under the guns of the gallant Commodores Bainbridge and Decatur, December, 1815, not however without previous humiliating failures, arising from treaty-making and money-paying for the release of Americans held in slavery, in one of which treaties, for the sake of conserving the good-will of Mohammedanism and prospering our trade, it was solemnly declared that "the government of the United States of America is not in any sense founded on the Christian religion."[1] This shameful repudiation by officials ready to imitate the infamy of Iscariot, availed us nothing. In 1801 the Bey of

[1] Lyman's "Diplomacy," Vol. II., pp. 380, 381.

Tripoli declared war against the United States; and in 1805 the war was brought to a close, not without glory to the American arms, by a fresh treaty. Then the Bey of Algiers took up the sword against the young republic, and the contest terminated with results more to our credit. But, still, it was reserved to England to drive forever the corsair's vessels from the seas, to reduce his last great stronghold, and to give final deliverance to those whom he scornfully had called "Christian dogs," and had treated as beasts of burden.

Long before this struggle had reached its acute stage, but after it had commenced, another chapter in the annals of slavery had been opened. Charles V. conceded to a Flemish courtier, 1517, the privilege of importing into the West Indies four thousand blacks from Africa; and in the year 1620—year memorable to the Pilgrim Fathers—while an English fleet was seeking the freedom of Englishmen held in bondage to Algerian masters, African slavery was introduced into the colonies of North America.[1] Here then were implanted the seeds of future bitterness, wretchedness, and discord. Nor was it hard to see the pathetic analogy that existed in coming time between the institution as it developed in America and as it was in the Barbary States. Many reformers seized on this comparison, and brought it to bear on the conscience of the youthful republic. In England, likewise, the strange incongruity of a nation fighting against slavery in one quarter of the globe and practising it in another, was dilated on with much telling eloquence. Thus, the British and American cannon, thundering on the coast of Africa, awakened searching

[1] Bancroft, "History of the United States," Vol. I., p. 189.

echoes in heart and conscience of kindred people on both sides of the Atlantic.

How these echoes gave place to passionate declamation against wrong, and how the declamation was changed into logical argument in the House of Commons, and how from that emancipation in the West Indies proceeded; and how in the United States this humane enactment influenced contemporaneous thought; and how anti-slavery literature spread through the land; and how Missouri Compromises, Dred Scott decisions, and John Brown raids grew into civil war amid whose volcanic flames slavery perished forever, its doom having been preceded by the freedom of the serfs in Russia, 1861, followed by the loosening of shackles everywhere, I shall not venture to describe. But this titanic conflict has furnished to America her national epic, in which as time grows older the world will discern more clearly than we do now the majesty of its heroes, and the terrible sublimity of its tumultuous battles. Though of the men and their deeds I must not undertake to write, who does not know that the overthrow of slavery was the destruction of an old world and the beginning of a new? Since its doom the industrial world has taken on a new form. It is not as it was; although it has drifted away from some of the fair ideals which were held before its eyes when the war against oppression was being waged. A more humane spirit has taken possession of the earth. Benefactions are more generous and more frequent; reforms are more common, and the dignity of man as man is more generally recognized. But whether we can draw clearly the boundary line between that dark past and this brighter present or not,

it is still true that reflecting minds admit its reality and its profound significance. And whether they admit it or not, they sometimes must have suspected that the blood shed to purge away the guilt of slavery from the land admonishes us, by the terror of a similar penalty, to countenance no form of bondage, whether in distant possessions or at home. "Blood will have blood," and for every drop that flows from the cruel lash, or is wrung from the torturing agonies of unrequited toil, atonement in blood will ever be demanded. The influence of Christianity on this historical event, or on this series of events, attaining the culmination point in widespread human emancipation, recalls her connection with the patriotic aspirations of the Greeks flaming into struggles for political independence during the earlier years of the nineteenth century. Then, as in her struggles with the slave powers, her spirit was wholly on the side of freedom. In a sense it was the renewal of the old conflict between the Crescent and the Cross, the Cross disdaining longer to be considered by the Moslem the badge of an inferior race or of an abject subject class. Many changes had taken place since that eventful day, May 29, 1453, when Constantinople was captured by the Turks, and Mohammed II. entered the city by the gate of St. Romanus, humming to himself the lines from a Persian poet:

> The spider has spun her web in the palace of the Cæsars,
> The owl has sung her watch song on the towers of Afrasiab.

The Greek population throughout the Peloponnesus, Moldavia, Wallachia, Crete, had been kept in servile subjection, though it is to be remembered that quite a

number of its more acute and intelligent representatives had been chosen by several sultans to act as dragomans, and to serve as hospodars, and to assist in international diplomacy. From these favored ones there had developed in Constantinople society a wealthy community, known as the "Phanariots," whose sons were educated in the best European universities, and who in this way were brought into touch with the liberal opinions everywhere current at the commencement of the nineteenth century. Some writers claim that the French Revolution was the real instrument that roused in the Greeks a desire for independence, which found expression when Prince Alexander Ypsilantes crossed the Pruth, March 6, 1821, and which, after varying fortunes, was realized by January, 1822. But there was another influence back of this inspiring movement. After the invasion of Russia by Napoleon, 1812, serious conflicts distracted the dominions of Sultan Mahmoud II.,—styled "the shadow of the Almighty upon earth,"—and as he heard that the Greeks sympathized with the Servians and Albanians in their fierce resistance, he issued the following decree: "Every Christian capable of bearing arms must die. The boys shall be circumcised and educated in the military discipline of Europe to form a supplementary corps of Janissaries." What was this decree of extermination but an appeal to the smoldering fires of religious passions and prejudices? There could be but one answer: Germanos, archbishop of Patras, employed all authority of his office to inflame the ardor of the Greeks.

To show how deeply the destiny of Christianity entered into the conflict, it should be observed how fre-

quently since its close the Sublime Porte in its treaties with other powers has given assurances that the followers of Christ should remain unmolested in its dominions. This promise appears in the treaty of Adrianople, 1829; also in the imperial rescript, the Hatti Sherif, 1839; again in the pledges made by the Sultan Abdul-Medjid in 1844; and even more distinctly in 1850, when the same sultan guaranteed the Protestants liberty of conscience and all the rights enjoyed by other Christian communities. And after the Crimean War ended, 1856, these concessions were confirmed in the most solemn manner and in these generous terms :

> As all forms of religion are and shall be freely professed in my dominion, no subject of my empire shall be hindered in the exercise of the religion that he professes, nor shall he in any way be annoyed on this account.

But wherefore the need of these repeated declarations, and wherefore the care of diplomats, representing Christian powers, to exact them on every available occasion, if the religious question has not from the beginning been the chief issue between the Sublime Porte and the revolted Greeks? While the Greeks have refrained from proclaiming a crusade, and while the community has constantly been stirred up by the Turks, still had there been no Cross to defend there would probably have been no such enmity, and few, if any, of the barbarities that ensued. The presence of Christianity, therefore, in the Turkish Empire, with the ideals it fosters and the sacred isolation it maintains, was a potent factor, and I believe the chief though not the only one, in the series of events which make up the

history of the struggle for the resurrection of Greece. It was an episode at once brilliant and bloody. Multitudes of Greeks were murdered in Constantinople and Adrianople by the orders of the sultan. On the fifteenth of June, 1821, five archbishops and many laymen were hanged in the streets of the former city, Salonica was decorated with "a ghastly dangling fringe of Christian heads," and it is said that twenty-five thousand people were massacred on one day in the island of Scio, and thirty thousand women and children were sold into slavery. Heroic deeds in defense of the outraged people were wrought by the Greek fleet under Hastings and Cochrane, who had forfeited their English commissions that they might espouse the cause of the insurgents. Kanaris, Marco Bozzaris, and others, were immortalized by their devotion to freedom, and Lord Byron, rousing himself from his lethargy, devoted life and fortune to its victory. He was followed by the sympathetic well wishes of thousands, and had he not died soon after his arrival at Missolonghi, he probably would have been made king of Greece. England officially was drawn into the contest, for Canning perceived that it would be bad statesmanship to permit Russia alone to espouse the cause of the Greek Christians, and moreover the sentiment of the churches of Great Britain was openly hostile to the Turk. The pressure from this quarter was too great for a prime minister to ignore or resist. A fleet was dispatched, but before war had been formally declared the brilliant victory of Navarino was won, October 27, 1827. Russia sent an army under Diebitsch, and after enormous losses at Silistria, Brailono, and Varna, terms of peace

were discussed, and the treaty of Adrianople was signed. The kingdom of Greece was ultimately formed, and though its influence on the affairs of Europe has not been extraordinary, still only a few years ago it justified its creation by the noble way in which it espoused the cause of Armenian Christians; and though defeated in that glorious championship, its chivalrous action may have served to terminate the atrocities then being committed by reminding the Turk that he might yet go too far and bring a united Christendom thundering at the gates of Constantinople.

The Crimean war may be taken as a third chapter in the story we are relating. And this too had its origin in religious issues, and brought into relief the religious ambition of Russia. It is well known that Peter the Great predicted that, as Europe had been compelled in the past to submit to hordes of conquering races from the East, so would it at some future day be forced to yield to the Muscovite power. He, therefore, urged on his successors the importance of acquiring Constantinople and the commerce of India. But while these circumstances are familiar to intelligent people, they do not as fully realize that these dreams of world-wide empire are closely allied with the firm belief that the Eastern Church is likewise destined to supremacy. And yet evidence of this expectation are not far to find. Mouravieff, when a member of the governing synod, declared that he and his associates were "thoroughly convinced that the famous Oriental Sees will recover their ancient splendor." More recently a Russian writer has expressed himself in the same spirit, as follows:

There remains now but one orthodox empire. The prophecies are accomplished which long ago announced that the sons of Ishmael should conquer Byzantium. Perhaps we are destined also to see the fulfillment of that prophecy which promises that the Russians shall triumph over the children of Ishmael, and reign over the seven hills of Constantinople.[1]

And in harmony with this exalted faith, the Tsar Nicholas in his proclamation of March 26, 1848, employed this language: "Hear and bow down, ye Gentiles, for God is with us"; and when addressing the Russian and Polish bishops, May 26, 1849, he said: "The true faith survives in Russia only; in the West it is utterly lost." In view of these sentiments we can well understand the significance of what Mr. Kinglake states regarding this monarch:

He was always eager to come forward as an ardent and even ferocious defender of the Greek Christians in Turkey; but he dreaded interfering with Turkey when the opportunity was offered him unless he could get the alliance of England.

What more natural then, when the controversy was renewed in 1851, concerning the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, and the prince-president, Napoleon, demanded enlarged privileges for the Catholic, than that the Greek Christian should appeal to the tsar? The momentous question involved was whether the Latin priests might possess a key of the great door of the chapel in the grotto at Bethlehem, and whether in the sacred edifice above ground a silver star with the arms of France on it might be suspended. The Greeks had had the ascendency in everything pertaining to the holy

[1] "*Question Religieuse d'Orient*," etc., p. 97.

shrines since 1740, and they looked on these new privileges as seriously threatening their supremacy. They would not yield. The controversy grew in fierce and impassioned intensity, and the tsar enthusiastically championed the cause of his own church. He saw that it furnished an opportunity for a movement favorable to the realization of the dreams of Peter the Great, and the first move in the game was taken when he marched an army toward the Danubian provinces. As Turkish soldiers had charge over the territory occupied by the holy shrines, the questions in dispute were referred to Constantinople, where the representatives of the nations involved, including England, met in conference and came to an amicable agreement. For a time it seemed that the prospects of immediate war had been happily diminished. But there yet remained a peril. The tsar desired to be given legal power over the Greek patriarch at Constantinople, and to be acknowledged as the protector of Greek Christians throughout the Turkish Empire. But this demand France and England were not prepared to allow, and the Sublime Porte, encouraged by their opposition, was more than ready to reject. At this point, then, Russia failed in diplomacy; and though the plenipotentiaries of various European States tried to compose the mind of the tsar and reconcile him to his disappointment, inflamed by fanatical zeal for the one holy and orthodox church he persisted in his mad ambition. His determined stand led to outbreaks of Mohammedan fanaticism in Constantinople, and the sultan was urged to declare war against the infidel. The Christian population was seriously menaced by this fury, and that it might be checked, and that Russia in seek-

ing to gratify her political and religious ambition might be controlled, the English and French ambassadors ordered their respective fleets to pass the Dardanelles.

War immediately ensued. Of its progress and horrors it is not necessary to write. Vividly has its history been portrayed by Mr. Kinglake, in whose volumes we find this estimate of its character:

> This war was deadly. It brought, so to say, to the grave full a million of workmen and soldiers. It consumed a pitiless share of wealth. It shattered the framework of the European system, and made it hard for any nation henceforth to be safe except by its sheer strength.

In compensation, if compensation it can be called, for such sacrifices, Russia destroyed her fortresses on the Black Sea; that sea was opened to the trade of western Europe; Sardinia gained the recognition she had sought; and Turkey promised that Christians should stand on an equal footing with Mussulmans in the empire. And thus the unspeakable agony closed. That is, it ended for the time being, and only so long as the Sublime Porte considered it dangerous to renew the murderous policy of ruin and extermination against defenseless Christians.[1]

In 1876 the peace of Europe was again disturbed by the "Great Assassin" of that day, who, incited by his furious hatred of the Cross, let loose his soldiers on the helpless people of Bulgaria. More than a hundred villages were destroyed. An entire schoolful of children was brutally slaughtered; and it is computed that in the month of June alone forty thousand of the popula-

[1] See Kinglake, "Crimean War"; Latimer, "Russia and Turkey"; Freeman, "Turks in Europe"; Greene, "Armenian Crisis."

tion were massacred. These outrages produced a revulsion of feeling, and generally the sultan was denounced. But Alexander II. of Russia was not satisfied with the execration of the murderer. He demanded that the porte should fulfill its treaty obligations, and immediately marched his army through Roumania to the left bank of the Danube. Mikhail Dimitrivitch Skobeleff, the "white general," as he was called, was given command, and in every respect justified his imperial master's confidence. Of his heroic struggles before Plevna, and of the devotion of his men, whom he affectionately termed his "lions," and of the vicissitudes of fortune which attended him, I dare not undertake to write, as I should be carried away by enthusiasm from my real purpose. Let it suffice, the Turks were beaten, the treaty of San Stefano was signed, which afterward had to give way to the treaty of Berlin. This checked Russian ambition, and, as the events of the last ten years have proven, deprived Christians in Turkey of the only defender who has cared to take up the sword in their behalf. By this treaty again religious liberty and personal safety were guaranteed by the porte, and pledges were given for the execution of needed reforms in Armenia.

This was in July, 1878, and from that date up to 1894–5, the great powers were in constant communication with the porte regarding the fulfillment of these solemn engagements. They appealed, they threatened, they negotiated—and hoped. Doubtless more afraid of each other than of their common foe, they simply betrayed the helpless subjects of the sultan, and in the hour of need abandoned them to his cruelty. The Ar-

menian massacres—twelve thousand victims in Sassoun alone—horrified Europe and America, and called forth many a Christian protest. But on both continents the generous emotions that cried out for intervention, were stifled by questions of prudence and the right of nations to immolate their own citizens. Meetings were held, resolutions were passed, money was subscribed to succor survivors from the cruelty of the Turk; but the only available things, a fleet and an army, were not forthcoming, even though Europe was being impoverished to supply both. The only relief to this passive policy of complicity with outrage and assassination, was furnished by the Greeks, who were shamefully left to themselves by the powers who were bound to make the cause of the Armenians their own. But their vigorous action has been followed by a lull in the Eastern tragedy, though there are rumors as I write that it is fast coming to an end. Unquestionably, this long and bitter hostility of the Crescent cannot be suppressed in coming time. It wants only a fitting opportunity to break out with renewed violence. We should always remember that the Ottoman government rests on a religious foundation, and that the official prayer of Islam includes a petition that Allah would destroy the enemies of their faith, and would give "their friends, their possessions and their race, their wealth and their lands, as booty to the Moslems."

Thus, then, the Turks are bound by their faith, by their prayers, as well as by race prejudice, to carry on a war of extermination. And yet the officials in England and elsewhere, knowing this, and knowing that a real intervention would be effective, and knowing as well that

no reliance can be placed in Mohammedan promises, hesitated, paused, shuffled, and not only brought on themselves a measure of guilt for the crime committed, but left the door open for it to be repeated when it suits the sultan's pleasure. But, in the meanwhile, through these very persecutions Christianity has grown in dignity and power. She is clear of this bloodguiltiness. She has not incited to persecution; and she has nobly pleaded in thousands of pulpits the cause of the oppressed; and she has been taught anew a lesson which will have a salutary effect on the whole world by and by—not to trust in princes and governments, as they continually betray her and her children with apparently no compunction when they imagine that their own aggrandizement is at stake. When, after Sassoun, a professed Christian emperor can call the Sultan Abdul Hamid his friend, and rest in peace beneath the gilded roof of the Yildiz Palace, the church may well disentangle herself from all formal and official *concordats* of every kind with secular governments; for history has already decided that such as he would betray Christ himself if the pieces of silver were only sufficiently numerous.

The scene of the drama we are following now changes, and we approach a conflict, the religious significance of which, and the ultimate influence of which on the destiny of nations, few historical writers have as yet considered. In 1850 Cardinal Wiseman uttered words which thrilled the Roman Catholic Church with hope, for he said that "the decisive battle against Protestantism would be fought on the sands of the Mark of Brandenburg." He perceived that the hope of the papacy

lay in the restoration of the German Empire with Austria at the head, and that in achieving this end war must overwhelm the Protestant Germans. And it must be allowed that when he spoke the indications were favorable to the realization of his sanguine, not to say sanguinary, expectations. Since the days of Olmütz Prussia had witnessed the aggrandizement of Austria, under whose leadership the diet of Princes was held at Frankfurt in 1863. Moreover, she could not have failed to observe that these princes favored Austria, and that her rival was sustained by the potent influence of the papacy. Indeed, Austria had concluded a *concordat* with the church in 1855, which practically conceded to her the supremacy over the State that had been her proud prerogative in the Middle Ages, and for the loss of which she had groaned since the peace of Westphalia. It was also proclaimed by Ultramontanes, like Bishop Kettler, of Mayence, that it was the right of the church to revive the old German Empire, and thus to re-establish her own former power and authority over it. This is what the bishop meant when in his pastoral of 1855 he said: "When the spiritual bond by which St. Boniface had united the German peoples was broken, then German unity and the greatness of the German nations were at an end." From this date onward to 1866 repeated efforts were made to inflame Catholics against the members of the Reformed Churches, and things were published which were calculated to enrage one party against the other. Martin, bishop of Paderhorn, in his pastoral, 1856, affirmed that Protestants were incapable of being honest. Jörg, in his extravagant history, represented them in an infamous light. But worse

than all, in 1862, Desprey, bishop of Toulouse, celebrated with great pomp the tercentenary of St. Bartholomew and the base assassination of four thousand Protestants; and the bishop of Trent (1863), commemorating the council that had held its sessions in his diocese, spoke in these slanderous terms of the Reformers:

> After Luther, in order to gratify his passions, had raised the standard of rebellion against the church of Christ, the most abandoned men in all Europe flocked around him, . . they trampled the blood of Christ under their feet, and robbed very many souls of the blessings of heaven in order to hurl them into the abyss of hell.

Such language could only have one result. It could not fail to generate bitter feelings, and rouse vindictive passions. Schiller inquires:

> Who knows what the coming hour
> Veiled in the thick darkness brings us?

And in these unwarranted attacks, and in the machinations once more to secure the ascendency of St. Peter's throne in Germany, there lurked the dread shadow of devastating war.

It took on itself palpable form in 1866. The direct cause which brought on the clash of arms between Prussia and Austria was the disagreement which had arisen over the disposition of the duchies of Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg, which these powers had torn from Denmark, and to which neither had any right. But back of this issue there lay the graver question of imperial supremacy. Each, ambitious for the primacy among the States of Germany, was apparently ready to measure strength over this minor dispute, and they were

swept by the rush of events into a brief, bloody, and decisive struggle. On the third of July the battle of Königgrätz, or Sadowa, was fought, and Prussia was victorious. The success which crowned her arms brought to her many political advantages, and to her ally, the kingdom of Italy, the possession of Venetia and the fortresses of the quadrilateral. This was a step of importance toward the realization of those dreams which contemplated nothing short of the overthrow of the pope's temporal power in the land where it had so long been maintained. Königgrätz, while not fought to determine whether Protestant influence was to be paramount, dispelled the fond expectations of the Ultramontane party. The reconstruction of the German Empire with Austria as the chief had to be abandoned, and with it the prospect of restoring the church to her medieval rank and dignity.

That ecclesiastics thus understood the situation was manifest when, in 1870, the Franco-Prussian war was waged, for a Jesuit at Paderhorn represented it as a war of Protestants against Catholics. Moreover, the French were encouraged to expect sympathy from the Ultramontanes in Germany, and assuredly if Napoleon had conquered, Protestant as well as political Prussia would have been humiliated to the lowest point. Consequently, we are warranted in claiming for this struggle a religious significance, which, although unconfessed by rulers and military leaders, is none the less apparent in the results. For not only is the restored German Empire essentially Protestant, but the Catholic Church has lost her temporal possessions, and since 1870 a very strong current has been making for triumph of evan-

gelical principles on the continent. Marks of this current are witnessed in the abrogation of the *concordat* of 1855; in the subordination of the hierarchy in Prussia to a minister of State chosen in 1871; in the enactment that German priests shall go through the curriculum of a German university, and that no new theological seminaries shall be established; in the penalties imposed on priests, 1874, for officiating without government license; and in the provisions made for the supervision of the religious instruction given to Roman Catholic children; to which must be added the expulsion of the Jesuits and other secret orders from the empire in 1872–73. These and other measures have led to much controversy, and to no small amount of diplomacy. But there is no probability that these barriers against papal pretensions will ever be swept away. They will stand. And they will always recall one of the giant events of modern history, in which are seen, behind policies and temporal ambitions, the old battling spirits of Reformer and Romanist striving for pre-eminence, and to this extent largely determining the happenings, small and great, of men and nations, and fixing the trend of religious thought and life possibly for the next hundred years.

In the public affairs of no country has Christianity borne a more prominent part than in those of Italy; but we regret to add that it has not always been of the most beneficial character. There for centuries one special type of common faith enjoyed practically undisputed sway; for the Waldensian Church was doomed to exile from the business of the world, and existed only in obscurity, while the papal autocracy was recognized in all the divided States of Italy as supreme.

However dukes and princes might war among themselves, and however they might substitute one ruler for another, they agreed in rendering spiritual homage to the pontiff, and in permitting him large liberty of interference in civil and political institutions and measures. Within his own territories he was chief potentate as well as chief priest, and rarely did any one venture to gainsay him. Within these territories, and particularly within the circle of the Eternal City, the unhappy social chaos that prevailed demonstrated the inadequacy of such an ecclesiasticism as he represented to promote the real purity and progress of society. The more we become familiar with the failure of the Roman Catholic Church to furnish a working model of what a well-regulated municipality should be, the more we are disposed to adopt the dictum of Guizot: "Christianity is a spiritual force. It was meant to work as a hidden leaven. It was not not meant to be a great institution." We are not holding this church wholly responsible for the divisions between various geographical limits which conduced to a chronic condition of internecine strife, and which encouraged outsiders, like the Austrians and French, to usurp authority over these rival States. And yet when these alienations and feuds are recalled, how visionary seems the promise now proclaimed by the Vatican that the restoration and rehabilitation of the papacy would end the divisions and separations which afflict the Christian world. If its influence was insufficient to preserve the unity of Italy, how can it hope to succeed in harmonizing the clashing interests of vast empires and mighty denominations?

But, whatever may be the illusions cherished on this

point, there is no room for any when the subject of civic administration is concerned. Rome, under the later popes, was a wretched city, where sanitation was practically disregarded, where a free press was impossible, where police regulations were miserable, and where property and life were continually in jeopardy. No people were ever more misgoverned, or more scorned and ignored, than its citizens. These neglects of duty to the community, with the miscarriage of justice and increase of taxes inseparable from ignorant or vicious administration, at last aroused the spirit of revolt, and as early as 1831 agitations on behalf of a free Italy and a united Italy began to attract the attention of the world.

It would be a mortifying confession were we obliged to concede that the only influence of Christianity on the succeeding series of events, which terminated with the entrance of Victor Emmanuel into Rome, September 20, 1870, was of this pernicious kind, driving the people to seek by force what she should never have withheld from them, and which it ought to have been her highest honor to conserve. While we are not obliged to go as far as this, nevertheless I am prepared to accept the logic of my own teachings. Had the church been faithful to the ideals of Christ, the evil condition into which Italy was brought probably would have had no existence, and there would have been no necessity for Mazzini, Cavour, and Garibaldi, and no place for heroic sacrifices and patriotic zeal. But as she had been false to her Lord, she had helped to involve the land in social and political misery; and in this way, if in no other, she brought about the upheaval and

made it imperative for Italy to seek its own regeneration. Taking only this partial view, it is manifest that the influence of the church, though admittedly an influence not to her credit, was conspicuously operative in the revolutionary history of Italy from the times of the Carbonari societies to the fall of Napoleon III.

But much more than this must be be allowed. In a different and better sense Christianity became an important factor in the liberation of the Italian people. Even Pius IX. must be credited with certain enlightened reforms which tended in this direction. These were the measures which distinguished the earlier days of his pontificate. When he was elected to succeed Gregory XVI., who passed away in 1846, after having excited the citizens of Rome to the fever point of insurrection by his vicious administration, he proclaimed himself a liberal. The whole of Europe was startled by this phenomenon,—a reforming pope,—and statesmen and monarchs realized that this example would encourage popular demands. Of the significance of this strange ecclesiastical spectacle Thomas Carlyle wrote in 1850, and his words are worth recalling:

> A simple, pious creature, a good country priest, invested unexpectedly with the tiara, takes up the New Testament, declares that this henceforth shall be his rule of government. No more *finesse*, chicanery, hypocrisy, or false or foul dealing of any kind; God's truth shall be spoken, God's justice shall be done, on the throne called of St. Peter: an honest pope, *papa*, or father of Christendom, shall preside there. . . The European populations everywhere hailed the omen, with shouting and rejoicing, leading articles, and tar barrels; thinking people listened with astonishment—not with sorrow if they were faithful or wise, with awe rather, as at the heralding of death, and with a joy as of victory beyond death!

Something pious, grand, and as if awful in that joy, revealing once more the presence of a Divine justice in this world. For, to such men it was very clear how this poor devoted pope would prosper, with his New Testament in his hand. An alarming business, that of governing in the throne of St. Peter by the rule of veracity! By the rule of veracity, the so-called throne of St. Peter was openly declared, above three hundred years ago, to be a falsity, a huge mistake, a pestilent dead carcass which this sun was weary of. . . Law of veracity? What this popedom had to do by the law of veracity, was to give up its own foul, galvanic life, an offense to gods and men; honestly to die and get itself buried.[1]

Well, though the good pope did not follow Carlyle's stern injunction and bury his office, he did the next best thing, he tried to animate it with the spirit of the gospel. He inaugurated a better government in his own dominions. He liberated political prisoners and began to form a constitution. Italy was thrilled with joy and gratitude. Constitutions were granted in Tuscany and Piedmont; and where they were withheld hostile demonstrations followed, Palermo rising against King Ferdinand and Naples joining with her, and the Milanese demanding an extension of liberty from the Austrians. This last appeal was, however, answered by force, the citizens being massacred by the Austrian soldiery, and occasioning widespread lamentation and indignation. These instances, not to mention others, indicate the beneficial influence of the papacy in its reforming mood, and had it only continued, to this sagacious and benign statesmanship would have been attributed the subsequent regeneration of Italy. But unhappily it came to an end. Pius IX. soon discovered what an "alarming business" he had undertaken, perceived

[1] "Latter Day Pamphlets," No. 1.

that the papacy and veracity had nothing in common, and adopted reactionary ways. Still, the effect of his example, when at his best, could not be lost. It afforded the people a momentary glimpse of what Christianity really contemplated and authorized, and what their political and personal rights were according to its teachings. For a moment they had been permitted to see that their aspirations were fully warranted by the Faith they cherished. The picture might be withdrawn from view, but the impression it had made could never be effaced. Henceforward, they would act in harmony with the gracious vision, and yielding to its charm they pressed forward to those heroic achievements which crowned Italy with glory and independence.

The three great leaders in these achievements were Mazzini, a native of Genoa, Garibaldi, a citizen of Nice, and Cavour, who was born among the conservative aristocrats of Piedmont. The first has been called "the prophet" of the awakening; the second, its soldier; and the third, its statesman. While they embodied much of the New Testament spirit, how far they were themselves directly inspired by its ideals is an open question. When Count Cavour with his dying breath uttered the memorable words, "a free Church in a free State," he left behind a witness to the real source of his devotion. If, as has been alleged, Garibaldi in his revolt from the abuses connected with the hierarchy had drifted into free thought, it would seem that the statesman, thinking more profoundly than he, had come under the influence of Christ, the world's greatest teacher. Of Mazzini no other adequate explanation can be given than that he also had caught something of the spirit of the Master.

His addresses and appeals are distinguished by a certain religious tone and by a devout quality, which separate him from the rude scoffers of his age. He exclaims:

> God exists because we exist. God lives in our conscience, in the conscience of humanity. For conscience invokes him in our most solemn moments of grief or joy. . . He who can deny God either in the face of a starlight night; when standing beside the tomb of those dearest to him, or in the presence of martyrdom, is either greatly unhappy, or greatly guilty. . . Perhaps the first atheist was a tyrant, who, having destroyed one-half of the soul of his brethren by depriving them of liberty, endeavored to substitute the worship of brute force for faith in duty and eternal right.

In another discourse he says:

> Foremost and grandest amid the teachings of Christ were these two inseparable truths: *There is but one God; all men are the sons of God;* and the promulgation of these two truths changed the face of the world and enlarged the moral circle to the confines of the world.[1]

But without quoting further, we perceive from these citations, that this reformer, as well as Cavour, derived his inspiration from the deep wells of Christianity, "pure and undefiled." Some of his specific teachings may be open to criticism when tested by the letter of God's word, but there hardly can be any doubt that his soul had been illumined by the light of truth which had streamed on the world, through prophets and apostles, from the "great white throne."

Nor should it be overlooked that there were in Italy other Christians than those which professed allegiance to the papacy, and that they for centuries had been

[1] "Memoir, Joseph Mazzini," pp. 280, 287.

quietly circulating a gospel fatal to tyranny, whether ecclesiastical or political. The revolution of 1848 opened the gates of the Waldensian valleys, and brought into notice the representatives of that church which Paul had founded in Rome, and which had existed in obscurity through the ages, and which had only occasionally been remembered by their sufferings, and by the majestic appeal of Milton:

> Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints; . .
> . . . their martyred blood and ashes sow
> O'er all the Italian fields. . .
> . . . that from these may grow
> A hundred-fold.

Charles Albert, in the constitution of 1848, freed the Waldensian Church from all her disabilities, and secured to her immunity from persecution, and after the audacious campaign of Garibaldi, in 1859, the peninsula, with the exception of one spot, where still "the triple tyrant" held sway, was open to her missionary labors. She felt the thrill of the new responsibility, and delivering her message, though she may have abstained from political discussion, necessarily trained the people for the final victory that was to crown their persistent endeavors eleven years later. But who can tell how far this long-suffering church, hidden from the eyes of the world, sowed the seeds of national regeneration when pursuing her ordinary ministrations? If the gospel itself is a social dynamic, she could not have preached it, however prudently and quietly, without preparing the way for the ultimate upheaval. I, therefore, venture to trace to her teachings and devotion a large part of those primary aspirations which roused Italy from its lethargy and won

for it a position of honor among the nations. When Victor Emmanuel entered Rome, in 1870, it is reported that a Waldensian pastor marched in the procession with a large open Bible before him on a cushion. His presence in the midst of the army, bearing the divine word, was symbolic and significant. It was an explicit recognition of the influence of Christianity in all that had taken place; it reminded the world that the cause of freedom had been promoted by Bible-loving Protestants in England; and it proclaimed in the most convincing manner that the religion of our Lord was still the mightiest force in giving direction and character to the history of mankind.

Of this, additional proof has been furnished in the last days of the nineteenth century by the interposition of the United States on behalf of despoiled and despairing Cuba. The war against Spain was not in its origin either political or commercial. It was evolved, and that too without premeditation or desire, from the tempest of moral indignation which the barbarities inflicted on a humble people struggling for freedom wrought in the soul of a nation whose most sacred traditions are intimately allied with the gospel of Christ. It would be misleading to represent the pulpit as fomenting strife, or as invoking violence. Doubtless a few clergymen saw that the appeal to the sword would be inevitable, and expressed their convictions clearly. But neither they nor others courted war. They realized, however, that there was something worse than a sharp, short, military campaign—the prolonged anguish and agony of men, women, and children, tending surely toward extermination; and when no other alternative was left, they

joined in calling on the government to eject the oppressor from an island he was devastating. When diplomatic relations were broken with Spain, the administration at Washington solemnly assured the world that it was moved by no ambitious schemes of conquest, but only by the most benevolent considerations. It claimed to be the mouthpiece and the executive of the outraged Christian sentiment of the land, which demanded that it should champion human rights and humanity against usurpation and savagery. And there can be little, if any, doubt that the authorities interpreted aright the national will. They would have been generally condemned had they taken up arms for the extension of empire, for the territorial enlargement of the republic, or for any other selfish and vainglorious object. But when they mobilized armies and fleets in the name of philanthropy, and assured the world that only the spirit of chivalry was being evoked, they were sustained and commended by the adherents of all parties. Up to this point the direct influence of Christianity is plainly visible, as it likewise was in the conduct of the war; for from the first to last the officers and men, both of the army and navy, in their relations with the enemy never forgot that they represented its generous and enlightened civilization.

What the final outcome of Spain's humiliation is to be, it is difficult now to foresee. The Philippines and Porto Rico, as well as Cuba, have come within the jurisdiction of the United States. Whether Christianity will be as effective in the regulation of their affairs and in the determination of their political status, as it was in their deliverance, is at present involved in uncer-

tainty. The indications, however, are not altogether reassuring. The impression made by some recent utterances is that our chief business with dependencies is to exploit them in the interest of our own land; that is, as it will prove, in the interest of certain capitalistic combinations. What an ignominious change from the lofty motives proclaimed when our brave soldiers took the field, to the sordid and selfish scheming of public men who are anxious to multiply the national revenues, even though the integrity of the national constitution is jeopardized, and the national pledges solemnly given to the weak and helpless are repudiated and dishonored. If this trend is to be arrested, and if the preservation of the principles and institutions of the United States is to be prized above the retention of a dozen archipelagos, and if we are to make our occupation of other lands a blessing and not a curse, then must all good citizens speak out, and especially must all good Christians plead with those in power that the well-being of the governed, and not the financial advantage of those who govern, be made their chief concern. It is not for the church, as such, to pronounce on the constitutional questions involved in the acquisition of distant territories. This is entirely outside her domain. But it is her privilege, and lies within her province, to protest against such an interpretation of the Declaration of Independence as fell from the lips of a United States senator, by which the colored races are deprived of equal recognition with the white in its famous summary of the rights of man. Nor can she be neutral or indifferent to any policy which overrides constitutional provisions and guarantees, without abandoning the cause of human

progress. Neither can she be thus guilty without jeopardizing her own safety. For if one portion of the highest law of the land can with impunity be set aside in the interest of national revenues and protected industries, then why not another, and why not that enactment which secures to the church herself freedom to preach the gospel and worship God? Her own independence and dignity are involved in the discussions which are now taking place in political circles. She must be true to her mission. Without venturing opinions on technical questions which only the Supreme Court can determine, she is bound by her character and offices to protest against every form of serfdom, however mild; to insist that whether "trade follows the flag" or not, liberty, justice, equality, honor, and honesty shall and must; and to demand that no favoritism or partial legislation shall give free course to any traffic to brutalize a dependent people and hinder the beneficent ministrations of religion and education.

A final illustration of the influence we have been tracing has been furnished during the nineteenth century in the wonderful power of Christian missions over heathen nations and savage tribes, modifying the civilization of the former and beginning the civilization of the latter, and determining in a remarkable degree the history of both. When our eyes are turned toward India, China, Japan, Africa, and the islands of the sea, we seem to be witnessing a recurrence of those victorious days two thousand years ago when Christianity went forth to convert an empire, and to bring barbarian tribes within the scope of gospel ministrations. In the opening section of this volume we saw Christianity once

more girding herself for world-wide conquests. A little over a hundred years ago, it may be said, this latest demonstration against the blackness and infamy of earth commenced. William Carey sailed from England for India in June, 1793. That was the humble and unpromising beginning. With what contempt does Sidney Smith and his cynical class contemplate this venture of a "consecrated cobbler." And yet his departure marked the beginning of a movement which was in coming time, not only to affect the religions of the East, but to exert a decisive influence on social and political affairs. Of the evangelistic results of this endeavor once more to carry out the commission given by Christ to his disciples, we can form some idea from a summary published within the last few months by Rev. E. E. Strong, D. D., editor of the "Missionary Herald":

> The missionary societies of the United States have in foreign lands 1,067 stations, 5,776 outstations, 1,383 male missionaries, 2,095 female missionaries, 17,300 native laborers, 402,507 communicants, 237,487 pupils under instruction. The income of these societies for the current year has been $4,710,430. The missionary societies of the United States and Canada, of Great Britain and continental Europe, of Asia, Australia, and Africa, are represented in 5,217 stations and 13,586 outstations. Together these employ 6,364 male missionaries, 6,282 female missionaries, 61,897 native laborers. There are 1,585,121 communicants in their churches, 685,849 pupils under instruction, and their income for the last year has been $15,360,693.

And these statistics, dry as they may seem to some people, but eloquent to others, may well be supplemented by what has been done since the year 1800 to give the Scriptures to the world. Their circulation may be taken as an indication of the progress attained

by the religion of Christ; for wherever it extends its borders there must the truth be published in the language of the people. Encouraging, therefore, are these statements culled from "Leslie's Weekly":

According to trustworthy estimates, some 280,000,000 copies have been published and disposed of during that period by the Bible societies alone; and, if all printed copies were to be included, it is probable that the number would not be less than half a billion. . . Two Bible societies stand far above all others in the gross amount of their circulation—the British and Foreign Bible Society, whose output during the century has reached a total of 160,000,000, and our own American Bible Society, which issued last year 1,380,892 volumes, and in all, since its foundation, 66,000,000 volumes. Where has this vast army of books gone, and how did they reach their destination? It has taken a regiment of skilled laborers to accomplish it—porters and carriers, or colporters as they are technically called, carefully marshaled and organized under a staff of experienced officers in many countries all over the world, and employing every mode of transportation known to mankind to carry the book across seas and continents, so that it may reach not only great nations in China and India, but even those unknown and barbarous tribes who have no literature until this, the finest literature of the world, is thus brought to them. Already the agents of the American and of the British foreign societies are beginning work in the Philippine Islands. . . The Zulu Bible published by the American Bible Society, is a factor in South African affairs larger and more influential than many more conspicuous in international politics. Whatever happens in the Transvaal, it will not cease to do its silent work. On the west coast of Africa, Bible translation has been proceeding for half a century, and the sheets of the Benga Bible, intelligible not only to that tribe, but to a cluster of rude tribes dwelling on that far-off coast, have been passing through the press of the society in New York, and when finished sent on their voyage to the Gaboon and Corisco Mission. Though numerically less, not less interesting is the circulation of the Bible among our own aborigines.

Only lately a grateful letter came in acknowledgment of a consignment of Bibles for use among the full-blooded Choctaws, who number 12,000. Choctaw and Cherokee, Mohawk and Dakota, Arrawack and Ojibwa, Seneca and Muskokee—what a polyglot undertaking it is to reach all these! Yet they are reached in one way and another.

Stimulating as are these reports, they do not begin to express, and no figures can, the happy effect the gospel has had on the lives of the unhappy peoples to whom it has come as a messenger of hope, both for time and eternity. Nor do they suggest the mighty hosts among the native populations of heathen lands that have not yet professed, but who are favorably inclined toward the religion of Christ. Some things can hardly be catalogued and numbered, and among these are the new feeling of kindness, the new respect for wife and children, the new desire for enlightenment, and the new endeavors to acquire the arts of civilization which have been born of this (to the refined pagan and cruel savage) singular faith, that is not satisfied with merely taking people out of this world to live in a better one, but is intent also on making this one much better, in which they and future generations can live peacefully and joyously. A veritable transformation of the most momentous character is going on at this moment in various portions of the globe. Ancient nations are in the earlier throes of a new birth, and wild and warlike tribes that heretofore have never combined and have never dreamed of orderly government, are now feeling their way toward something like national unity and development. As the origin of the different States which make up the kingdoms of modern Europe from the territory of the dis-

membered Roman Empire constitutes one of the most significant of historical events, and proved prolific in historical complications and crises, so that which is taking place to-day is equally momentous, is as truly and as portentously historical, and will make as fully for historical struggles and achievements. And every one who has taken pains to inform himself on this subject knows, whatever other agencies have entered in, that Christianity is in the highest sense the inspiration of this quickening of old nations and birth of new ones.

Within our present circumscribed space we can bestow only a cursory glance on what is in many respects the most interesting movement of modern times. We must deny ourselves the pleasure of considering the heroic story of John Williams (1817–1839), as he pursued his way from Eimeo to the disastrous shores of Eromanga, preaching and praying, until everywhere within ten thousand miles of Tahiti, including Aitutaki, Atu, Rarotonga, and Samoa, the gospel achieved the most remarkable successes. These islands have been wonderfully blessed, and have already been drawn into the political life of the world. Their influence in that relationship admittedly is as yet very slight. Nevertheless it is being felt, and it is growing. And when we join to them the Philippines on the eastern extremity and Hawaii on the western, then the whole of Polynesia, employing that term in its widest sense, very likely will acquire a significance in the immediate future which we can hardly appreciate at present. Indeed, there are not lacking signs that Hawaii and the Philippines are already looming up as important factors in the world's commerce and civilization.

What these islands are to-day, what they are in their preparation for autonomous existence and self-government, is due mainly and primarily to the labors of devoted missionaries. To the Catholics was given the East, to the Protestants, the West. Soon after Magellan discovered the archipelago (1521), the Augustinian Friars began their ministry in the Philippines (1565), and were followed by the Franciscans (1577), and these and other religious orders, aided Philip of Spain in bringing the natives under the yoke with as little bloodshed as possible; as little as possible, for the natives were not ready tamely to submit at the beginning, as they have not been, and are not now, willing to remain passively obedient to those who deprive them of independence. In the west Protestants were instrumental in rescuing the Hawaiians from their degrading superstitions, and from the terrible fascination of the bloody altars on which they had for ages offered human sacrifices. It ought, however, to be stated that the beginnings of this deliverance antedated the arrival of the missionaries, for two months before Kamehameha I. died he was moved by a mysterious influence and forbade the further observance of these sanguinary rites. The missionaries landed March 31, 1820, and within six years several chiefs had embraced Christianity, among them the Regent Kaanumanu, and twenty-five thousand pupils were gathered in Christian schools. So rapid was the progress made, that the apostolic age seemed to have revived, and these distant islands were held up before the church as an evidence of what the gospel could do in saving the nations. Critics have not been slow in pointing out that all

the natives have not been converted, and that all the converted are not perfect; an unhappy fact, as true, however, of America and England as of Hawaii. But such critics are not mindful to add that the beneficial results of missions are frequently restricted, and sometimes counteracted, by the mercenary and contemptible trade spirit, which does not hesitate to debase and pollute a race just entering on civilization through the use of strong drink.

In heathen lands, as in lands where the church is honored, the virtues of Christianity have to struggle for existence against the vices of civilization, and sometimes seem to disappear for a season in their ooze and filth. But a people even partially Christianized, after a while can hardly fail to develop certain industries, and thus render their country of some commercial value. In this way, while the new faith is exposed to unexpected perils, the country itself may excite the cupidity of its stronger neighbors, or on account of its strategic importance may fall a prey to alien governments. Thus, against their will, these reclaimed regions may become the center of political combinations and the occasion of serious conflicts. And as the nineteenth century was drawing to its close, both Hawaii and the Philippines, through some such means, emerged from previous obscurity. They have given rise to armed demonstrations, to the humiliation of nations and parties and to the elevation of others, to political maneuvering, and to the most audacious and unscrupulous statecraft. Up to the present, and whether ultimately for weal or woe, they have been made the victims of commercial rapacity and greed, which have invoked the sacred

names of liberty, benevolence, and religion to hide or extenuate their nefarious machinations. The extent of these, at least as far as the Philippines are concerned, and the shameful degradation and misery they entail, are coarsely acknowledged in the following congratulatory item addressed to the trade by the "Wine and Spirit News":

> As one result of American occupancy of Manila the liquor business has reached enterprising proportions, and is now considered as one of the leading, as well as one of the respectable, kinds of business. Says one correspondent: "On the Escolta, the principal street, only a quarter of a mile long, there were but two places where intoxicating liquors were sold when we entered the city, whereas now there are eighteen. There are three hundred licensed places in the city where liquors may be obtained, licenses costing three dollars per year. The income of the largest, the Alhambra, is stated on good authority to be seven hundred dollars per night. Already the street cars are topped with large signs detailing the exquisite qualities of certain whiskies. One quarter of the daily issue of the principal English newspaper published is devoted to extolling the perfection of a brand of beer, while the largest drugstore in town devotes a whole column to advertising its fine line of liquors, with no mention of its medicines."

This is "benevolent assimilation" with a vengeance. And the end is not yet. But however it may terminate, these distant regions have been making recent history, and doubtless in the future, through the influence of the gospel they have embraced, they will come into still greater prominence, and, as we hope, may in some measure serve the cause of human emancipation and civilization everywhere.

Africa is another of those countries where Christianity has been laying the foundation of civil order, and,

as we believe, of future commonwealths. Henry M. Stanley wrote in the "Century Magazine," a few years ago that "fully three hundred missionaries" had entered the Dark Continent since 1877, and that their labors had been most fruitful. He adds:

> In Uganda alone there are two hundred churches and fifty thousand Christians. One has but to glance at the latest map of Africa to be convinced of the zeal, devotion, and industry of the missionaries. Mission houses do not grow of themselves. Gospels are not translated into African tongues, nor are converts spontaneous products of human nature. I am somewhat familiar with African facts, and to me these things represent immense labor, patience, and self-sacrifice.

And referring in another communication to the vigor and virility manifested by a tribe that had accepted Christ in opposition to a cruel and savage ruler, he bears this splendid testimony:

> I take this powerful body of native Christians in the heart of Africa, who prefer exile for the sake of their faith to serving a monarch indifferent or hostile to their faith, as more substantial evidence of the work of Mackay than any number of imposing structures clustered together and called a mission station would be. These native Africans have endured the most deadly persecutions—the stake and the fire, the cord and the club, the sharp knife and the rifle bullet have all been tried to cause them to reject the teachings they have absorbed. Stanch in their beliefs, firm in their convictions, they have held together stoutly and resolutely, and Mackay and Ashe may point to these with a righteous pride as the results of their labors to the good, kindly people at home who trusted in them.

Here then we have the proof that the religion of our Lord is still as potent in developing manhood as in the early days when the Roman slave and the poor work-

men from the sandpits dared defy the persecuting imperialism of Rome. And it may be, and I dare predict it will be, unless the spiritual forces are neutralized by the greed and vices of Western civilization, that in these regions where hitherto ignorance, superstition, and pitiless torture have held sway, Christianity will succeed in building up an empire the peer of some that now exist, and an honor to the many heroic lives that have already been sacrificed on its behalf, and especially to the name of Livingstone, whose heart lies buried beneath a Moula tree, and who, as Blaikie suggested, may fittingly be called *Africanus*, after the custom of the Romans.

Yokoi, a leading reformer, near the middle of the century wrote to a friend: "In a few years Christianity will come to Japan and capture the hearts of the best young men"; and a short time ago it was declared by a distinguished foreigner that "new Japan is largely a product of Christian influences." [1]

"The personal influence of Christian statesmen of America, England, or Germany," wrote Dr. Gordon, "over Japanese statesmen has been deeply felt and acknowledged. It is, for example, an open secret that when Count Ito, who afterward framed the national constitution, visited Germany, he was remarkably affected by the evidently sincere declarations of the Emperor William and Prince Bismarck that the Christian religion is essential to the prosperity of Japan. . . Christian civilization has achieved and is achieving a great victory physically, intellectually, and morally, in that far-off island empire." [2]

Last January (1900) its government submitted a bill to the Diet, placing all religions on precisely the same basis, thus giving practical effect to the freedom of con-

[1] Speer, "Missions and Politics in Asia," p. 190. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 191.

science already guaranteed by the constitution. This is a most important measure. It gives to Christianity a recognized standing and definite civil rights, and exempts its houses of worship from taxation, as the temples of Buddhism and Shintoism are favored. With this new opportunity there can be little doubt as to the result. No religion has ever yet been able to hold its own against the Cross when the conditions have been equal. Whenever their respective claims have been determined on their merits, and uninfluenced by adventitious circumstances, Christianity has always forged triumphantly to the front.

But it may be objected that its early victories in Japan have not continued during recent years, and particularly since the humiliation of China. To some extent this may be admitted. It is one of the perils of military success that "we forget," and come too much to rely on "reeking tube," and with our "valiant dust build on dust." With her toy houses of dust Japan is playing at present. Her next war, if not some internal convulsion, will rouse her from her folly. The faith of the West had much to do with her social and national revivification. Her condition was pitiably weak and depraved when the Earl of Elgin (1858) drew her into commercial relations with Great Britain; yet this advantage would have availed her little but for the beginning and extension of Protestant missions. In 1623 her rulers had exterminated the Christianity of that time which owed its origin to the zeal of Roman Catholics, and the work had to be begun afresh in this century. But when once it was commenced it increased rapidly, and soon the number of native Christians exceeded

twenty-eight thousand. The whole country felt the reinvigorating power of the new moral life. The people became more alert and progressive, more thorough and independent, and thus quickened and developed they proved more than a match for China. But now if the island kingdom recedes, if she puts away from her the Cross, and yields to the inevitable moral decline, the Russian Empire, that is planting itself in Korea, may strike at her sovereignty successfully. There is at present an uneasy feeling in Japan. A writer in "*The Yorozu Choho*" thus describes her condition:

> Japan's case is that of Christian civilization without Christianity. She is aiming at a definite form of organization without the life that organized it. The peculiar awkwardness of her present position is due to her hopeless attempt to assimilate the new civilization to her old ideals.

And if she persists it will terminate in a national catastrophe as marked in its way as the convulsion that overwhelmed Jerusalem after the rejection of Christ and his mission. Evidently Christianity has had much to do in qualifying her to take her place with the Western nations, and if she is to continue, and if she is to play a part in the history of the Orient at all comparable with the effect of her decisive struggle with China, then she must return to the Faith, and its devoted adherents must do what they can to revive its influence and authority.

And as yet we have said nothing of China and India, those enormous empires whose vastness invests them with a singular mysterious charm, and prevents them from being at all compassable in an ordinary treatise. What then can be said of them in our limited

space, and of the divine religion that has been brooding over them for a hundred years, like the Creative Spirit moving on the face of the waters before chaos was disturbed, but without as yet perceptibly dividing the darkness from the light? At an earlier date, however, Christianity had advanced its outposts beyond the borders of these wonderful domains. It is claimed that the gospel was carried into India by one of the apostles, and in the sixth century it was proclaimed by the Nestorians in China. The divine message seems to have made little impression on these lands. Its teachings were as alien to the native mind as were the manners and methods of the teachers, and were apparently received with silent contempt. As when the civilization of the Tiber broke with its clamorous voices and riotous ways on the quietness of the Ganges, so the stirring and revolutionary faith of the Cross at first only startled and amazed:

> The brooding East with awe beheld
> Her impious younger world;
> The Roman tempest swelled and swelled,
> And on her head was hurled.
> The East bowed low before the blast
> In patient, deep disdain;
> She let the legions thunder past
> And plunged in thought again.

Nor is she yet thoroughly aroused from her meditation. The English Baptists renewed the attempt to evangelize India on the close of the eighteenth century, and Morrison commenced Protestant mission work in China in 1807. Since then considerable progress has been made; and yet in comparison with the unheeding

and the unmoved mass the achievements are as slight and imperceptible as the small and widely separated oases that diversify without changing the character of the desert. But history is being made rapidly in the East, particularly in China; and the next few years are crucial. What missions have commenced will soon be accelerated by politics and commerce. Under various pretexts European nations are practically dividing among themselves large portions of Chinese territory; and the United States government has secured from all parties concerned an agreement that the "open door" policy shall be maintained. How long such an agreement will hold, and how far even written guarantees will be observed by European statesmen, it is not easy to foresee. But it may safely be said that when their interests seem to demand a rejection of treaties, and the repudiation of pledges, they will not be slow to discover a way out of their entangling conventions. But whatever the issue, it will be found at last that everything is destined "to fall out for the furtherance of the gospel." As long as the existing arrangements are uninterrupted Christian missions enjoy a comparative immunity from hostile demonstrations, and can pursue their way unmolested, silently leavening the empire; and if violent disruption and dismemberment come in the near future, they are on hand so to take advantage of the crisis as to plant firmly the church of Christ in the heart of what will be the new world of the East.[1]

[1] While these words were passing through the press the world was startled by the "Boxer" outbreak in China, and horrified by the tragedy at Pekin. What it all means none can know, but the kingdoms of the earth must become the kingdoms of the Christ.

They will assuredly have a voice in determining the moral, social, and economical conditions of the future. The ethnic faiths of heathen lands have demonstrated their supineness and weakness. From them nothing is to be expected of good, and they have not virility enough to interpose an effective barrier in the path of the gospel. They cannot, in the nature of things, exert a molding potency on the age soon to be born in the Orient. Their day is past. They have no to-morrow. Christianity is their God-ordained successor. It will survive when they have perished, and it will pursue its benignant mission through the lands long blighted by their supremacy. And as these lands emerge from darkness and desolation the instrumentality of Christianity will be recognized in their illumination and deliverance ; and as they take their places side by side with European nations and begin to bear their part in shaping the destinies of mankind, a telling demonstration will be furnished of its supreme influence on a hundred years of history.

Referring to God's ancient people, Stade writes: "The history of Israel is essentially a history of religious ideas" ; and, while I cannot say quite as much of the immediate past, still their unique and perennial power must be acknowledged. They shine perpetually like stars in the overarching skies of human affairs, and brighten the path of men and of nations. None of us can be quite satisfied with all their movements, combinations, and practical emanations ; nevertheless, on the whole, they have achieved wonderfully and propitiously. They have been shaping themselves more and more into a kind of austral cross, the gleaming prognostic of a southern

day. The relation of Christianity to a century of history is not discouraging, but rather otherwise. It has presented the phenomenon of a religion, not always officially or by the direct planning and scheming of its dignitaries and representatives, working itself into the tumultuous events and revolutionary changes of the times; and doing so often in the face of the most desperate opposition, and in such a way as frequently to modify or transform their character. In this manner it has come to reveal itself more clearly as an independent force, like the wind, to which in a sense our Lord compared it, blowing whither it listeth, and bearing in its breath the life-giving airs of paradise. Being thus free to assert itself, and, while acting on man and through man, seeking its final development in man, being enlarged on its divine side, it has been able, and is yet able, to control, order, and time all things in the interest of Christ and his kingdom. This is the conviction that grows upon us from the review of the last hundred years. And as we look back the evidence accumulates that all movements are accordingly tending toward a consummation when, as Sir Edwin Arnold sings:

> High as the herald star which fades in floods
> Of silver, warming into pale gold, caught
> By topmost clouds, and flowing on their rims
> To fervent glow, flushed from the brink
> With saffron, scarlet, crimson, amethyst:
> Whereat the sky burns splendid to the blue,
> And, robed in raiment of glad light, the King
> Of light and glory cometh.

XI

THE OBSTRUCTIONS AND OPPOSITIONS

Yet this is He of whom we made our boast,
  Who lit the Fiery Pillar in our path,
Who swept the Red Sea dry before our feet,
  Who in his jealousy smote kings, and hath
Sworn once to David : One shall fill thy seat
  Born of thy body, as the sun and moon
'Stablished for aye in sovereignty complete.
  O Lord, remember David, and that soon.
The glory hath departed, Ichabod !
  Yet now, before our sun grow dark at noon,
Before we come to nought beneath thy rod,
  Before we go down quick into the pit,
Remember us for good, O God, our God.

—*Christina Rossetti.*

But all things shall be ours ! Up, heart, and sing.
All things were made for us—we are God's heirs ;
Up from thy depths in me, my child-heart bring—
The child alone inherits anything :
God's little children gods—all things are theirs.

—*George Macdonald.*

XI

THE LIMITATIONS OF CHURCH SUCCESS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The impression has been zealously propagated that the transit of time from the nineteenth century to the twentieth is being ominously marked by the increasing debility and decay of Christianity. This alleged condition of spiritual senility and decrepitude has been hailed with every token of satisfaction by one section of society, and has been equally lamented by the other. They alike have been so infatuated and bewildered by the triumphant shouts of the foes of Christianity, and by the despairing wails of her faint-hearted friends, that they have in common quite overlooked the signs of her strength and the evidences of her successes, with which these pages have made us somewhat familiar, and have never taken pains to ascertain the measure of what they regard as failure, or to account for it on rational principles. In this respect they have acted with less discrimination than they have shown when startled by complaints of disappointing results in other departments of thought and activity ; for it should never be forgotten that the religion of the Cross is not the only great cause which has come short of the promises made and the expectations excited by its character and earlier conquests.

Professor Bryce has pointed out with great clearness, that though the past hundred years have been most

fruitful in radical changes, the prevalent discontent proves that they have not wholly justified the eulogiums they have received. With the enlargement of freedom, the invention and application of machinery, and with the extension of educational privileges to the masses, the people had a right to hope that the termination of their ancient disabilities had been actually reached, and that the future would fully compensate for untold sufferings long endured. But alas! the visions dreamed in 1800 are far from perfect realization in 1900. Professor Bryce likens this generation to a party of excursionists who set out early in the morning to scale the side of a lofty mountain :

> At first, the vivid flash of dawn and the keen morning air fill them with delight and make even the difficulties of the path enjoyable. . . But when, after a time, the air has grown sultry and the limbs have lost their spring, then the roughness of the way begins to tell upon their spirits, and the peak that looked so near looks no nearer, and one doubts if they have not missed the way, and another is sullenly silent, and a third regrets that he ever started, and what was meant to be a pleasure turns out to be a toil.

Thus the age, enamored of the hoped-for blessings which the exalted achievements in the domains of politics, science, and sociology seemed to place within its reach, has struggled onward, joyfully at the start, but now, wearily, has come to question whether the gain is really worth the toil, and is after all anything but a promissory note that never can be honored.

Cries of "failure" are heard on every side. They are echoed in harsh, discordant tones in connection with the most treasured and sacred institutions, enterprises, and developments of the Western world, from the

Mediterranean to the North Sea, from the North Sea to the Atlantic, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Freedom is held up to derision by Pobyedonostseff and the Russian press; it is fiercely and vociferously denounced by leaders of thought in lands accustomed to despotic rule; and it is not shielded from criticism in countries where it has wrought its mightiest marvels and bestowed its choicest favors. It is being asked in England and the United States, and that too not by ignorant demagogues, of what particular advantage is a liberty which confers the right to vote for gentlemen to enjoy the emoluments and dignities of office, but leaves the artisan to the mercy of corporate greed and gives him no voice in determining his own wage or in deciding whether he shall be permitted to work or not? And of what avail even the privilege of voting when it is a matter of current belief in America, and scarcely concealed, that the money power rules at Washington, and rules always and unscrupulously in its own interests? If this belief is well-grounded, no wonder that freedom is held up to scorn; no wonder also that the suspicion is gaining hold on the public mind that enormous private wealth is inimical to its preservation, and that the day is fast approaching when the people must choose between the Declaration of Independence or the supremacy of despotic capital.

Municipal governments, likewise, in republics are constantly witnessing to the unsatisfactory outcome of universal suffrage. It is generally conceded that free institutions show at their worst in cities. There, if nowhere else, they have been easily abused by political "bosses" and their henchmen, and have proven them-

selves to be no adequate barrier in the way of vice and and crime. The disclosures of what has been going on in New York, the payment of large sums by the proprietors of disreputable resorts for police protection, and the toleration of all kinds of infamies, furnish a painful illustration of the insufficiency we refer to, and which probably is matched in less degree in other large communities. But shall we hastily conclude from these shortcomings that liberty is a failure, and that on the whole it has not made for the advantage and happiness of mankind? Is not such an inference altogether too rash, too violent, and absolutely too absurd? It does not and cannot carry conviction. In view of the prosperity and progress of the nations that have cherished freedom, we dare not be guilty of such ridiculous calumniation. All that these deficiencies and weaknesses establish is that freedom as yet has not been able to "work her perfect work," that she has not been able to overcome certain obstacles in her way or transcend the limitations of one kind or another by which she is hampered. This is the reasonable explanation of her partial defeats and temporary disasters. And we ought to think in the same way when accusations of failure are laid at the door of machinery, of education, and of the press. That these mighty appliances have not accomplished all that we are warranted in anticipating from them goes without saying. Leading educators admit this, and they are discussing in conventions and magazines the best and most scientific methods by which more gratifying results may be attained. Sociologists recognize the problem which machinery has introduced into the industrial world, and are striving so to solve it

as to secure to the people the advantages of machinery without its drawbacks. Editors are not blind to the special difficulties by which they are embarrassed in giving to the public such a newspaper as shall meet every legitimate demand and be free from objectionable features. Everywhere we hear of reforms being matured and attempted in these various departments; and we are encouraged to look for important improvements in the near future. To talk, therefore, of failure, when only all possibilities have not been realized, is as indefensible as similar talk of late indulged in by certain wiseacres about marriage. No; wedlock has not always fulfilled its promise, and in its actual experiences may have fallen far short of its ideals; but nevertheless, it has been and is one of the chief sources of human happiness and purity. That its success should be limited is apparently the common lot of our worthiest institutions and our highest blessings. They all seem to be bounded, hemmed in, checked by counter currents, and frequently polluted by the influx of debasing elements from other streams. Considerate men and women, even though not positively inclined toward optimism, and however disappointing some of the greatly prized features of modern civilization may be proven, will surely agree with this judgment. They will discriminate, will make allowances, and they will not abandon hope because complete ascendency has not yet been gained by what is most admirable and desirable.

May we not claim like candor and "sweet reasonableness" when the alleged decline and deadness of Christianity is the theme? Why should her supposed decadence and ruin be loudly proclaimed, and that too,

I am ashamed to pen it, with here and there a note of sneering jubilation, when all that can be made out against her is that her labors in several directions have not been so effective as they might have been in different and more favorable circumstances? That she has accomplished much and wonderfully during the last hundred years will be made evident before we are done, particularly in the closing portions of this volume. We have already seen,[1] however, the magnitude of her power in the modern world. To couple her name, therefore, with failure, is nothing less than a libel, and one that becomes increasingly shameless when it is considered that the inefficiency complained of is due primarily to her representative, the church, and not to herself. She never fails when in all of her original spirituality and simplicity she has access to the people, and she never can. But acting through the church, through organized forms and human instrumentalities, because of their frailty and earthiness, she has often found it next to impossible to express herself in all of her saving offices of life and blessing as she would. The instrument has been sometimes faulty and she has had to endure the reproach; the harp has been out of tune and she has been derided for the discord. Discriminating criticism at least is fairly her due. And then, even of the church it is not warranted to use language that represents her as having practically lost her grip on the age, and as having become perhaps irrecoverably decadent. Such statements are very far from the truth. The church is still strong, full of resource, capable of wonderful achievements, and entitled to the confidence of mankind. All that can

[1] Chapter X.

really be substantiated to her reproach is that her successes have not been so great as they might have been; that they have been bounded and checked in particular directions; and that they are sufficiently serious to call for the inquiry we propose to make concerning their limitations in the nineteenth century.

It should be borne in mind that we are not called on to consider an unprecedented condition of things, or one that is true exclusively of some particular type of organized Christianity. The progress of religion has always been diversified by reaction and retrogression. Charts full of zigzag lines, constructed for the benefit of traders, representing the fluctuations in the production and prices of wheat and corn, suggest the irregular and chevroned course of the gospel. It has varied its advance by momentary retreats, and it has not gone forward without occasionally going back. Thus the subapostolic age was followed by a season of declining spirituality. With the fall of the Western empire there was an awakening of intense missionary zeal, which carried life and light to the new kingdoms. But this was succeeded by the deadly superstition and blighting apathy of the Middle Ages. These in their turn disappeared before the aroused intellect and conscience of the sixteenth century. The Reformation, however, with all of its mighty enthusiasm, was checked. There followed a barren era of controversy, wrangling, and bloodshed. But of this sprang the heroic seventeenth century; and this, unhappily, was displaced by the moderatism, the coldness, the latitudinarianism, and the skepticism of the eighteenth. Then began the revivals under Wesley and Edwards. It seemed, so widespread

and deep was the spiritual quickening, that the entire world was on the eve of conversion. Alas! the tidal wave subsided once more, and then reappeared in 1800, only to sink apparently lower than ever for a time. In 1855–57 it rose again and swept majestically over North America, and was felt in the lands beyond Atlantic seas. Since then, even, there have been similar movements, not perhaps so great or so lasting, but as clearly defined, both in their ascent and descent, their expansion and contraction, in their floodtide and ebb.

Probably we are to-day experiencing in some degree the effects of depression and regurgitation, and it doubtless is as true of us as it was, according to Matthew Arnold, of the poet Wordsworth :

> He too upon a wintry clime
> Had fallen—on this iron time
> Of doubts, disputes, distractions, fears.
> He found us when the age had bound
> Our souls in his benumbing round ;
> He spoke, and loosed our heart in tears.

But at the same time we ought not to weep as they that have no hope. The present is not without parallel in the past. Let the savage tremble in dismay when the sun is eclipsed, we know that the blackness is not forever ; let the wind cry out in despair when the vessel sinks between the ascending billows, we surely must believe that from the watery valley she will rise to the foam-crested hills again. Although it is true that now it is neither day nor night, yet we should not lose heart of courage, for, as the prophet declared of old, and as God hath verified repeatedly in the history of his church —"at evening time it shall be light."

The predominant tone running through current comments on the present religious situation reveals a settled disposition to restrict whatever of falling away there may be to the evangelical bodies. Magazines or newspapers have scarcely anything to say about similar signs of weakness and decline on the part of Romanism and Unitarianism. And yet a fair and comprehensive induction of facts does not sustain any such partial and one-sided estimate. Ever since Rev. Dr. Ewer's singular hostility, thirty years ago, to the church of the Reformation, in which he went so far as to pronounce "Protestantism a failure," there seems to be a quiet assumption in various quarters that there must be some grounds for the assertion, and that, whatever statistics may say to the contrary, orthodoxy must be slowly wasting away. Unitarian congregations may be disbanded, and thousands may abandon the ranks of Catholicism, as in Austria to-day, and yet little notice be taken of these reverses; but when anything like them occurs in evangelical denominations, the news is spread with lightning rapidity and is made the text of many a prophecy of an imminent and ultimate catastrophe. In Boston several houses devoted to the worship of God have passed of late from the ownership of the anti-Trinitarians into the hands of the Trinitarians—one on Commonwealth Avenue, another on Newton Street, and yet another on Tremont Street—and still these transfers have not been to any marked degree regarded as significant. An authority beyond question, writing of Romanism in France, testifies:

> Formerly there was such a thing as Christian life; now there are only Christian practices. The great inconsistency fifty years

ago was faith without works ; in our days it is works without Christian progress. The increase of worship and devotion at certain periods hides the fact that in the population, as a whole, character is degenerating.[1]

The same volume confesses : "Victory escapes us, and we have arms that are invincible." And another author writes : "One is constrained to acknowledge that for the great mass of the people religion is reduced to a few rites and binds neither the mind nor the will."[2] The pen that recorded this judgment having enumerated the immense army of fifty thousand priests, supplemented by some twenty thousand "*religieux*" in France, continues :

> If only all this energy were employed for the same end and under proper control, with the sense of duty as motive, the New Testament as guide, and an infallible government and unimpeachable piety as guarantee for its efficacy, what might not the result be? . . The first clergy in the world, we ought to be, we might be, considering the materials of which we are composed. In reality we are among the last.

And yet these tokens of decay in France, which could be indefinitely duplicated of Romanism in other European countries, are usually ignored, particularly in the United States, where misled by an imposing local growth, the result of immigration, and where political exigencies often blind men to everything but the means of gratifying their immediate and pressing ambitions, it is taken for granted that the papacy is everywhere increasing in strength and ought to be placated at almost any cost. Government cringes be-

[1] "*Aperçu sur la situation de la Religion*," etc., etc.
[2] "*Le Clergé Français en 1890.*"

fore the Vatican, is anxious to conserve its good will, is ready with gifts from the public treasury, and hesitates to offend it by applying the constitutional principles on religious liberty to Porto Rico and the Philippines—except perhaps in words, words ever and ever stultified by deeds; and by this kind of policy in the past it has been responsible for the formation of anti-papal parties and secret societies, which have thus been called into existence, not by un-Americanism in religion, but by un-Americanism in politics. These time-servers, who imagine their tortuous sycophancy to be statesmanship and who seem intent on inviting disasters to the republic by giving attention to the would-be Richelieus and Mazarins of our times, are only deceiving themselves. They are leaning on a decaying force in the political world. France dares to prosecute and fine the Assumptionist Fathers; and still her most trusted leaders are repeating the watch-word of Gambetta—"Clericalism, that is the enemy!"—and Germany steadily resists priestly aggressions.

Our representatives by and by will also awake from their illusions. They will come to perceive that Romanism is not so commanding and so strong as they imagined; and that, while its liberties as a religion are, and must ever be regarded as sacred, it has neither the vigor nor the influence to justify, even on grounds of earthly expediency, the revival of its supremacy in the affairs of State. But whether our partisan politicians are open to conviction on this point or not, one thing is clear from the evidence cited, namely, that Protestant evangelical churches are not the only ones that have been impeded, strained, and buffeted of late. We do

not deny that these evangelical organizations have come short of success, that they have betrayed unfortunate weaknesses, and have not proven altogether equal to the gigantic task imposed on them by the new age. But our plea is, that they are not alone in this condemnation. It is shared by every other distinct form of ecclesiastical thought and polity. They have in common to deplore their vulnerable points, and to acknowledge that they have all reached certain boundaries beyond which they have been unable to carry their special work. We are not here entering into the comparative merit of these various types of Christian administration; we are neither denying nor affirming the general superiority of one over the others; we are simply maintaining, whether due to internal defects or to outward circumstances, that they have all the same story to tell of arrested progress and of partial defeat.

When the attempt is made to determine the range and extent of these limitations, attention is at once fixed on the increasing non-observance of worship and the falling off in church attendance. Careful estimates have been compiled by authors whose sympathies are wholly evangelical, and the results indicate that while there has been a relative gain in church-membership, there has been a relative numerical loss in congregations —a condition only to be explained on the assumption that many professors of religion do not so highly prize the means of grace as formerly and consequently absent themselves from divine service, and thus encourage multitudes to imitate their example. A forsaken and neglected sanctuary is always primarily due to the faithlessness of its avowed supporters. If the followers of

Christ are in their places on Sunday, the people of the world will not long remain away. Were a census to be taken of those who, having avowed themselves to be the Lord's, only attend on the means of grace irregularly, fitfully, rarely, or not at all, it would be demonstrated that the root of the evil we are confronting is within the church itself. Multitudes of those who are members in Protestant denominations seem to have but little interest in the house of God; and Roman Catholic services reveal, both in Europe and America, a significant destitution of men; and as long as this kind of indfference prevails we need not be surprised if the masses of society fail to recognize the claims of the sanctuary. It is useless, and worse than useless, for Christians to be seeking for reasons, apart from themselves, by which empty pews can be explained; and it is certainly not very consistent to deplore the falling away of outsiders from church when the members themselves are not over careful to be present.

As the existence and dimensions of this decline are hardly called in question, statistics for purposes of conviction are not really necessary. To those, however, who desire to pursue the study of the subject more in detail, we recommend the volumes of Rev. Dr. Josiah Strong and Rev. Dr. Daniel Dorchester, respectively named "The New Era," and "The Problem of Religious Progress." But while there is no need for us to reproduce their instructive figures in all their fullness, there are some of their findings and the findings of other inquirers, which may not be wholly without value for us to record and ponder. Thus, for instance, we may well reflect on Dr. Strong's astounding statement,

"that less than thirty per cent. of our population are regular attendants upon church, that perhaps twenty per cent. are irregular attendants, while fully one-half of the people of the United States, or more than thirty-two million, never attend any church services, Protestant or Roman Catholic." Nor is this lack of interest confined to great centers of population. It is almost as conspicuous in rural districts as in cities. Governor Rollins, of New Hampshire, in 1898 made this perfectly plain as far as his own commonwealth is concerned, and similar conditions to those he described are prevalent in Vermont, Maine, and elsewhere.[1] In many country towns there are families that seem to have no religious affinities or susceptibilities whatever. They observe no Sabbath, they respect no sacred institutions, and undertake no kind of Christian service. Their young people are ignorant of the Bible, are irreverent, and if they cross the threshold of a meeting-house it is only to partake in some kind of entertainment for the support of a cause, which ever afterward is associated in their mind with cheap and unedifying amusements. This state of things, however, if possible, is worse in large communities, particularly in cities like Glasgow and New York. These two metropolitan centers may be taken as fairly typical: one of a vast population essentially homogeneous and reared under pronounced religious influences; and the other of a composite people, representing different nationalities and various creeds. And yet, though widely separated in these respects, they present the same phenomena of desecrated Sabbaths and neglected sanctuaries.

[1] "The New Era," p. 204.

Glasgow contains eight hundred and twenty-seven thousand inhabitants, most of whom nominally subscribe to the Christian Faith; and yet the average attendance on public worship is given by "The Christian Leader," a local journal, at one hundred and forty-three thousand three hundred and fifty-five. This figure was reached by an able canvass of all congregations undertaken on a favorable day. But let us concede that it is only proximately accurate, and let us add another one hundred thousand; and still how pitiable and discouraging the showing, and that too in the land of the "solemn League and Covenant." And if this is the best that the Scottish business metropolis can show, we need not affect any amazement at the deplorable situation in the metropolis of America.

According to an estimated census of 1896, out of a population of three million one hundred and two thousand five hundred and forty-four there were two hundred and fifty-five thousand six hundred and seventeen, or eight per cent., of Protestant church-members, twenty-seven per cent. of Roman Catholics, Jews, etc., leaving about one million three hundred and seventy-two thousand, or sixty-five per cent., of those classed as "non-religious," as compared with one million two hundred thousand, the population of Tokyo, the second largest heathen city in the world. In 1845 the Evangelical church-membership was thirteen and five-tenths per cent. of the population. In 1890 this had dwindled to eight and eight-tenths, and the decrease is still in progress. New York leads all other large cities in the proportional meagreness of its evangelical faith, with the exception of San Francisco, where the Protestant church-membership is only five and eight-tenths per cent. of the population. New York City has one Protestant church to every five thousand four hundred and forty-eight of population; Alaska, one to three thousand four hundred and sixty-one; South Dakota, one to two hundred and thirty-three,

and the Indian Territory, one to two hundred and twenty-seven. In one ward in Brooklyn, "the city of churches," there is no Protestant church in a population of twenty-three thousand.

These figures have been published by New York and Boston journals, and doubtless are in the main reliable. It is true that they do not give returns on church attendance; but they are more significant; for, as it is well known that the attendance is depressingly meagre when even measured by the small and diminishing membership, they seem to indicate a perilous and widespread alienation of the people of the city from the religion of Christ. There can, then, be no doubt that the church in such communities as New York has not kept pace with the population, and has not succeeded in gathering and preserving congregations of such dimensions as to inspire confidence in her strength or devotion. The same story is told of St. Louis, Chicago, Boston, London, Berlin, and Paris; and she must either arouse and strenuously exert herself to arrest the present drift, or in the near future expect a death struggle with the powers of darkness which may jeopardize her very existence. There is still time to retrieve the battle and win the day. But if professors of religion persist in ignoring the signs of the times; if they pursue the stupid policy of counting as enemies those who tell them the truth; and if they are content with the *laisser faire* method and the dilettanteish evangelism of recent years; while Christianity will survive even their insensate folly, they will seriously retard and embarrass her advancement, and may entail on her organized forces, known as churches, humiliating and almost crushing disasters.

But appeals to census reports are not the only means by which the real limitations of church success are to be determined. Unfortunately they disclose themselves clearly at different points and in various directions, and they can readily be ascertained and fixed. The inspection of these *termini* is necessary if we would understand how swiftly they are reached, how ominous they are, and how impassable they seem. We must turn, therefore, from the consideration of statistics, and contemplate the boundaries by which the activities and influence of Christian denominations are circumscribed and impeded.

In the political world these restrictions are painfully visible. That governments in some lands have been benefited by the labors of churches may at once be conceded, and that too without debate. The century has witnessed many improvements in the affairs of State. A higher sense of the value of national honor prevails in various countries. Generous and humane covenants and enactments have mitigated in a marked degree the horrors of war. No previous hundred years have witnessed anything like the hospital service and the army nurses, beginning with Florence Nightingale during the Crimean war; or the rise and devotion of the Genevan Cross Society; or the magnanimity with which General Grant treated the Confederate armies on the close of the Civil War; or the sympathetic telegram of England's Queen to the widow of General Joubert who had been so lately in arms against her troops, by which the nineteenth century has been so remarkably distinguished. In these respects the epoch now ending has been morally illustrious. It has been a veritable age of chivalry, surpassing in romantic bravery and courteous

bearing the former age to which this proud name has been exclusively applied.

But while these and other ameliorating changes have taken place, and while they are in the main to be attributed to the labors and influence of organized Christianity, nevertheless, there are not lacking signs of enormous evils surviving in the State which have thus far resisted and defied the remonstrances and appeals of religion. The church by this time should have rendered war obnoxious to the conscience of humanity and impossible to the nations. She has done neither. The gospel committed to her is a gospel of peace and goodwill, and is as thoroughly opposed to bloodshed as it is to public and private corruption. To suppose for a moment that it countenances slaughter and the triumph of violence is a gross insult to the memory of Jesus Christ. But how has the church acted? She has ameliorated that which she should have abolished. She has striven to humanize what is essentially brutalizing, and she at times has eloquently apologized for what ought unhesitatingly to be condemned. Were not her jarring sections so insanely jealous of each other, and were they to combine for this one purpose, war between Christian peoples would forever cease. But as long as the dignity of ecclesiastics and their apostolicity and other high-sounding nothings absorb their attention and keep them apart, so long will the poor laboring people be marched forth to battle and death, and so long will these helpless victims be warranted in counting the reverend and mitred leaders of the Lord's flock among their murderers. If the pope is in reality the head of Christendom, let him lay aside for a little while

his haughty exclusiveness, and invite all pastors and bishops, Roman, Greek, Protestant, to meet in a true Ecumenical Council, not to decide who among them shall be greatest, but to devise, to plan, to agitate for the suppression of war and for the enthronement of peace. That were a spectacle worthy the admiration of angels! That were a sight to hasten the conversion of the world more than all the preaching of the pulpit for a year! And that were a scene to silence the scoffer and make all good men rejoice!

But instead of this, or anything like this, what have we seen during the century? What? Why, the war, 1839–1842, waged by a Christian nation against China, and which, while opening the five treaty ports of Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and Shanghai, and attaching Hong-Kong to Great Britain, fastened the opium curse on the population, whose ravages have recently called forth this expression of horror from the Viceroy Chang Chih Tung:

> Assuredly it is not foreign intercourse that is ruining China, but this dreadful poison. Oh, the grief and desolation it has wrought to our people! A hundred years ago the curse came upon us more blasting and deadly than the great flood or the scourge of the fierce beasts, for the waters assuaged after nine years, and the ravages of the man-eaters were confined to one place.[1]

And what did the church do when this monstrous wrong was being inflicted? She remained practically dumb and apathetic. While to their credit some of her members protested and have been protesting, the great ecclesisastical bodies were too busy with Catholic revivals, and with grave questions relating to genuflexions

[1] "Siam," by Chang Chih Tung, Chap. X.

and other vacuous issues, to stir themselves energetically and unitedly on behalf of a much-wronged and much-afflicted people. And since then? Since then, the soldier, in the name of queen and country, or in the name of liberty and patriotism, has carried desolation into India and the isles of the sea, and has in every instance of victory fastened the liquor curse on the temperate Asiatics. Since then Cuba has been devastated by the Spaniard, and South Africa has been converted into a shambles and a pandemonium by embattled hosts, and now we "hear of wars and rumors of war," and now

> From camp to camp, through the foul womb of night
> The hum of either army stilly sounds,
> That the fixed sentinels almost receive
> The secret whispers of each other's watch;
> Fire answers fire; and through their paly flames,
> Each battle sees the other's umbered face;
> Steed threatens steed in high and boastful neighs,
> Piercing the night's dull ear; and from the tents,
> The armorers accomplishing the knights,
> With busy hammers closing rivets up,
> Give dreadful note of preparation.

And the church—what of her? The famous Peace Conference has been held at the Hague, inspired by an emperor, who, scarcely had it closed, crushed home rule in Finland, and added the Finns to the Stundists, Mennonites, Jews, Dukhobortsi, and others who suffer from Russian imperialism, and yet the Greek communion has offered no effective protest, if she has even ventured to utter a word of remonstrance.

The Roman Catholic hierarchy is on record as siding with militarism in the horrible injustice and cruelty in-

flicted on Captain Dreyfus; and it stands condemned at the bar of history for its failure to use its influence for the benefit of the oppressed and maltreated Cubans. It may be that the benevolent offices of the church—Protestant and Catholic—with the temporal princes might not have proven successful, but at least they might have been exercised. She is not to be blamed for failure; she is to be condemned for not trying to succeed. To the Peace Conference she gave not a whole-hearted support; and she has presented no united front against warlike preparations and demonstrations, either in Europe or America. It is not denied that occasionally she has held, or more accurately speaking, some of her members have held, peace meetings; and that she has roused to condemn the possibility of a struggle between Great Britain and the United States over the Venezuelan boundary question. But conceding everything that ought to be conceded, and more too, yet she has not arrayed herself as a whole against militarism, and is either too weak to attempt anything worthy of her divine claims, or is herself too worldly in spirit for the sufferings and brutalizing tendencies of war to have impressed her adequately. It does seem, having such a gospel as she has, having had two thousand years in which to preach it, and having had access to the chief rulers of the nations, that by this time she should have so educated the civilized races as to render "appeals to the sword," or rather to the cannon, abhorrent, intolerable, and impossible. Here her limitations are painfully evident. She has done something, but she ought to have done more; and that she has not been able to transcend a certain bound, or has not cared to, is a

grave reproach. It has tended to discredit her in the eyes of thinking men and women, and she cannot remain in this position much longer, feebly confessing her impotence or indifference without further alienating from her altars the reverence and confidence of mankind.

When we pass from the realm of statecraft to that of social life, we cannot fail to observe that her sway, while encouragingly manifest in many ways, is still circumscribed and obstructed. "Thus far and no farther," society seems to say to religion, "and here must thy proud waves be stayed." As the sea is indispensable to the land, cooling and sweetening the atmosphere, and bearing away on its tides the poisoning refuse and polluting excrement, so religion has proven its inestimable value to society by purifying and refining, in some degree at least, its governing ideals, and by the exportation or extermination of more than one odorous and defiling curse. But as yet its tides have never risen quite high enough to wash out the sewage from the subterranean course of great cities, or to cleanse all the mud flats that lie partly hidden and protected by attractive ridges, crowned with the beautiful creations of affluence and pride. Canute, if we may thus for a moment impersonate society, has succeeded in checking the oncoming waters, if not by a command, by barriers of one kind or another, and with more or less of resisting strength; and need is there for such heavenly influences as shall give to the world a spring-tide of healing and refreshing floods.

The farthest outposts of church success in recent social life are easily reached. They are indicated for

us by newspaper reports of unsavory doings in aristocratic circles; by magazine articles discussing such questions as marriage, divorce, the Malthusian principle, and the abuses of wealth; by novels which deal with the petty and large scandals growing out of sex relations, and which profess to be seeking the promotion of the purest idealism through the most disgusting realism; and by plays which represent the modern world as a kind of polite and elegant Sodom, where the intellect is almost exclusively occupied with the frailties of men and women, where lust has usurped the place of love, and where the fortunes of a soiled soul, like Camille, are assumed to possess a paramount fascination for intelligent and well-bred people of this generation. The stage has of late enlarged its empire; but it seems to have lowered its always low standard of morals. Its present condition may be judged from the prominence now given to the ballet. This species of sensuous *divertissement* is thrust before the eyes of theatrical audiences on every conceivable occasion, often without even the appearance of a pretext, as though no entertainment could be complete if it failed to appeal to the passions. In addition to this, judged by newspaper comments, more brainless, brazen-faced women earn a living on the stage by the display of their charms and their wardrobes, and call it acting, than ever before in the history of the dramatic art. All the efforts of reformers, and all the endeavors of a few earnest and reputable actors and actresses to rescue their vocation from the abyss of shame, have not succeeded in effecting any salutary change. Why this should be the case it is not easy to understand. We all are interested in the drama. There

are few among us to whom it would not prove an acceptable medium of recreation and instruction. There is in it that which appeals to the average man, something that grips him strongly and moves him mightily. And yet its trend downward is so pronounced, that though it is seen and deplored by its warmest friends, and striven against by some of its professed exponents, it has not thus far been arrested, and it is becoming doubtful whether it can finally be stayed. Indeed, it seems rather, that as society advances in refinement, elegance, and wealth, the stage declines in mental vigor, and in those qualities which make for pure womanhood and noble manhood. Of this, evidences are furnished by the criticisms of journals on much that has been produced in the theatres of late, and by the action of the municipal authorities here and there, leading even to jury trials, to prevent performances whose demoralizing tendencies should inhibit them from license. And if the drama does really "hold the mirror up to nature," if it does "show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure," then modern society is far from being morally sound at the core, and its condition is a pathetic comment on the labors of organized Christianity.

But may not the drama, after all, be a false witness, or at least be inadequate, incompetent, incomplete? Such, within limits, may be the case; and, indeed, it is difficult to conceive that humanity is as silly, affected, conscienceless, and as absorbed in romantic adulteries as play writers usually represent. But then there are other witnesses. What does art in other relations testify? What about the novel, about sculpture, painting?

Do these corroborate the testimony of the stage, and if so, in what particulars? That it is not wholly untrustworthy may, I think, be proven by the strenuous pleadings in recent literature on behalf of the nude in art, not only in pictures but in books. To judge from some utterances on this subject, beauty suffers if the free exposure of those portions of the body which the instinct of modesty veils be not allowed and welcomed. One would suppose from the delirium of this school that authors like Victor Hugo, Lamartine, George Meredith, and Ruskin, and painters like Holman Hunt, Millais, and Burne-Jones, were not masters of their craft because they avoid, and that too without any affectation of prudery, the method of stark naked realism. It is usually overlooked by those who are its devoted partisans that it had its origin at the first in a civilization where the ethical was less highly prized than the æsthetical, and whose fortunes were not such as to induce us to imitate its principles. The Greek mind was singularly enslaved by the charms of the human body. But writers who, in defense of the nude in art, always assume that this bondage was disassociated from prurient thoughts and libidinous desires cannot be familiar with social conditions in ancient Greece. Perhaps they will permit so exceptionally well qualified a witness as Rev. Frederick W. Robertson, of Brighton, to correct their immature and altogether defective views on this subject. This brilliant, cultured, and liberal clergyman in his "First Advent Lecture," says:

"The arts," in Greece, "became religion and religion ended in the arts. Hence, necessarily, sensuality became religious, because all feelings produced by these arts, chiefly the voluptuous

ones, were authorized by religion. There is a peculiar danger in refinement of sensuous enjoyments. Coarse pleasures disgust, and pass for what they are, but who does not know that the real danger and triumph of voluptuousness are when it approaches the soul veiled under the drapery of elegance? They fancied themselves above the gross multitude, but their sensuality, disguised even from themselves, was sensuality still, aye, and even at times, in certain festivals, broke out into gross and unmistakable licentiousness. And hence, the greatest of the Greeks, in his imaginary Republic, banished from that perfect State . . . all the statues which could suggest one single feeling of impurity. Himself a worshiper of the purest beautiful, it was yet given to his all but inspired heart to detect the lurking danger before which Greece was destined to fall—the approach of sensuality through the worship of the graceful and the refined." [1]

Plato was no Puritan, but he saw as clearly as any Puritan that the eye cannot be familiarized with the nude in art without defiling the imagination. We may argue that it ought not to be so, we may insist that the impurity is in the mind itself and not in the object, but all of our special pleading does not alter the fact that it is so, nor change the evidence that comes to us from the histories of Greece and France, that forms of unenveloped loveliness carved in marble or painted on canvas are not conducive to continence and virtue. It cannot, therefore, be regarded as a wholesome sign, that not a few who help to fashion public sentiment are talking about their genius being cramped by English and American prudery, simply because there is still some hesitancy among virile and intelligent people about rushing backward into the art slush and mire of former ages. That these frantic reactionaries should have any

[1] "Sermons," First Series, p. 202.

audience at all, especially as large and as sympathetic an audience as they have, is unfortunate, and if it is symptomatic, as probably it is, goes to corroborate the pictures of modern society portrayed nightly before the eyes of admiring thousands by the drama.

And in an equal degree many novels do the same. Not a few of them are doubtless penned with the best intentions, and are so constructed as not to promote the vice and crime they so graphically describe. This is true of Victor Hugo's "*Les Misérables*," and Hall Caine's "The Christian," and of others that shall be nameless. But leaving out of sight their moral purpose and moral influence, is it not reasonable to assume that the story and romance writers of our day, when dealing with our day, are fairly faithful to its chief characteristics? The "Anna Karenina," the "Kreutzer Sonata," and the "Resurrection" of Tolstoy, the "Jude, the Obscure," of Thomas Hardy, the "Ghosts," and "When We Awake from the Dead," of Ibsen, the "Paris," and "*Fécondité*," of Zola, and the various picturesque volumes of William Dean Howells, are surely true to life as it is on the close of the nineteenth century. Does Zola exaggerate when he portrays the unpopularity of motherhood, and the crimes that are being enacted in countries new and old against childbearing? We have all been made acquainted with the extent of these evils in France, and we more than suspect their increase in the United States; and now a statesman in New South Wales writes: "From Maoriland comes the cry that the children are not sufficiently numerous to fill the schools, while in Victoria there must be a like state of affairs, seeing that there are now a less number of children

under ten years of age than in 1891." The strike of the French against motherhood is evidently extending, reaching even to far-off colonies, and what is equally sad and portentous, illegitimacy increases in proportion as the dignity of motherhood wanes. Mr. Coghlan declares that in New South Wales "twenty-seven per cent. of the marriages" in a given period, "took place after the bride was *enciente*."[1] And this is a sufficient illustration of the immoralities fostered by theories which we fear have more adherents than is generally supposed, and in which the family idea is brought into disfavor and disrepute. If society, then, is not misrepresented by "*Fécondité*," and if its image is adequately reflected in the lust, the greed, the petty foibles, the ignoble ambitions, the gilded vice, the pharisaical impiety, the despicable intrigues, the broken marriage vows, and the sentimental loves perpetually recurring and continually bringing to light ungovernable passions, which make up the warp and woof of many novels, then the drama is not a false witness, and the church has reason to be depressed by her lack of success in fashioning the age in accordance with the high ideals she proclaims. She is not, however, to be blamed as though she were the cause or the occasion of its moral deformities and shortcomings. Hers is not the disgrace of their origin, though she cannot be wholly exonerated from the shame of their continuance. She either has or has not the means within her reach by which they can be overcome. If she has not, then she ought to seek them, and if she has, and has not been diligent in their use, then great indeed is her responsibility before God and man. But on either

[1] "Review of Reviews," Feb. 15, 1900, p. 178.

supposition her limitations are visible, and ought to excite the gravest concern on the part of all who have confidence in her mission, and especially of those who are charged with its vigorous prosecution.

These frontiers which arrest her advance would not, however, be so discouraging, or seem so impassable, were it not for the superficiality of her influence over many of her own members, and the feebleness of her hold on their convictions, conscience, and conduct. If she does not move more rapidly and effectively beyond her own boundaries, one reason is that she is checked within. She is held back by those who should impel her forward. She is like a military establishment whose authority is not respected by the soldiers, and whose power and skill are unequal to the task of training them for service in the field. The recruits are on hand, their numbers are sufficient, but the genius for discipline and organization is not available.

Here we discover another limitation, the most humiliating and appalling of them all. The church can multiply converts and enlarge her communion, but when it comes to the work of developing well-balanced Christian character, and of combining and concentrating her forces against intrenched iniquities, she is rarely ever more than partially successful. She is hindered and hampered, challenged and resisted even where her word should be law, and where her sovereignty should be honored. In saying this we are not forgetful of the hosts of loyal, heroic souls that serve her in evil as well as good report, nor are we blind to the fact that her recalcitrant children are better, truer, nobler, because of her motherly care than they would be had they remained

strangers to her oversight. But the flattering recognition of the homage she has been able to inspire and of the benefits she has been fitted to confer, cannot and should not hide from our eyes her failure to make all of her members all that they ought to be as citizens of the heavenly kingdom.

Some among them, and these not a few, seem to have very little in common with the types of saintly character which have shone as stars in the dark canopy of human history. What shall be said of a Sunday-school teacher who, having introduced her class into church-membership, undertakes to train these young disciples for future service by a course of study in Shakespeare? A singular school surely in which to learn Christ and to be taught of him! But the instructor was entirely oblivious to the incongruity, and apparently entertained no apprehension that she was fitting her charge to take more interest in the drama than in religion. This singular lack of discernment is constantly matched by the inability of other professed Christians to see anything wrong in their patronage of plays whose performance can only tend to weaken the foundations of home-life and pander to the indulgence of illicit love. We are perfectly familiar with their defense; and it is so flimsy that we can hardly believe that they themselves are deceived. It is usually expressed in terms such as:

> We despise a narrow religion; we are broad-minded; our nature demands the ministrations of histrionic art; we can discriminate between the evil and the good; we are not ascetic; and, then, how can the stage be reformed if Christians afford it no support?

Aye, indeed, how? But does it never occur to those

who fall into this special pleading that the church as a whole is not exacting, that she does not impose upon her members a monastic rule, that she does not object to breadth of mind, but only to that width of conscience which can receive with equal complacency the heroic verse of Shakespeare and the obscene innuendoes of modern dramatists, and that her contention is that the mass of theatre-goers from the pews do not discriminate as they should, that they do not protest against what is vicious and profane in the mimic scene, and evince no such indignation as might presumably influence money-getting managers to reform their so-called "school of virtue"? And what is there that furnishes a more lamentable illustration of her enfeebled sway than the contemptuous indifference with which her reasonable remonstrance is treated by her theatre-loving communicants? They pursue their own way as though she had never spoken; they insist on misrepresenting her spirit; they evince but scant respect for her reproaches and entreaties; and to all intents and purposes they side with the stage against the church, and do not assist the church in her desire to reform the stage.

This insensibility to her admonitions has another exemplification in the ominous decline of family worship; for notwithstanding all that she has said on behalf of the common household altar and of its sacredness and importance, recent and careful investigations go to show that it is being more and more neglected. What has become of the "priest-like" father? Why does he not gather his household about him as formerly to supplicate heaven's King for mercy? Wherefore, in altogether too many homes, are religion and religious ob-

servance ignored? What is the matter? Has the spirit of skepticism invaded the domestic circle? Has the head of the family conscientious scruples, growing out of the incompatibility of his ordinary actions with his profession of faith in Christ, against standing up before wife and children as one who is sufficiently sincere and consistent to lead them in their devotions? Is he afraid that they who know him best will receive his ministrations with scarcely concealed impatience and disdain? Evidently something is wrong. Usually it is assumed to be a sufficient explanation when the blame for this neglect is laid on the exacting demands of business. We are told that men have now no time, if they would succeed, for those patriarchal customs which ideally are so beautiful, but which practically are so inconvenient. But does not this very confession indicate a diminished confidence in the providential care of God, and in the need that exists for his wise and loving suzerainty over our temporal affairs? When the fires burn low on the family altar the suspicion is more than warranted that there is an expiring belief in their value and preciousness, and a waning sense of the realness of those sublime affirmations of the Christian Faith to which they are related. If this inference is fair, then the smouldering embers on the "sacred hearth" cannot be contemplated with unconcern by those who love the Lord Jesus and the advancement of his cause. But if they only denote a decline in spirituality and not a growing habit of questioning the fundamentals of religion, still they mark a loss of power in the members of the church, and a loss of authority in the church over her members.

Nor are her limitations restricted to such instances of defective piety and increasing worldliness. They are further to be traced in the grotesque and degenerate types of discipleship which appear to be multiplying in evangelical communions. Not a few restless and dissatisfied souls, not over-gifted with discernment and practical common sense, who have found the yoke of simple obedience unendurable, and who have never been able to perceive the moral grandeur that resides in duty done in daily tasks, have become conspicuous of late for their fads, for their pretensions to an esoteric knowledge of Christ, and for their abnormally egotistic estimate of their own views and their own activities. They talk loudly and incessantly of their self-immolation, as though they were pre-eminent in humility and sacrifice; and they often speak of their own faith in such a way as to create the impression that means and their employment are unnecessary, and an inexcusable reflection on God's ability and faithfulness. They have altogether the air of the superior person who is, of course, very sorry for the inferior orders, but whose unctuous self-depreciation has in it an undisguisable note of self-exaltation. These extraordinary and exceptional saints, who presume to contradict St. James and affirm that faith *with* works is dead being *not* alone, forget apparently that the contemplative life should be retired and silent, and that when it becomes vocal and voluble it loses its charm and, perhaps, its reality. For self to call attention repeatedly to the destruction of self is an unmistakable sign that self is in a fairly good condition of preservation and is still able to speak on its own behalf.

Some of those who indulge in this bland and sacred

self-complacency are individuals of extreme amiability, and are undoubtedly as morally blameless as the more commonplace saints whom they affect to commiserate; and they might be quietly ignored were it not that they unhappily influence people of disheveled intellect, of disordered fancies, and, occasionally, of dilapidated reputations, to set up as unparalleled and unapproachable saints themselves. These extravagant and incoherent creatures find the "order and decency" commanded by St. Paul irksome and monotonous. The church is not holy enough for them. Like St. Peter before he was enlightened, they presume to call that unclean which God has cleansed; and as he would not eat *of* those objects in the sheet let down from heaven against which the Mosaic law discriminated, so these excited rhapsodists are not disposed to eat *with* their brethren who have not risen to their own flighty altitudes. They must have their own services, their special meetings; in the name of peace they must attempt to create schism in congregations; in the name of humility they must magnify their own holiness and traduce their brethren; and in the name of truth they must give vent to the most unwarranted theories and the idlest speculations. Belated in their understanding and following a degraded religious instinct, they are not content with the God-appointed agencies for the advancement of his kingdom, and consequently put into prominence as teachers A——, who rests his claim to a hearing on his having been till lately a gambler; and B——, who is encouraged to preach because he is a retired pugilist; and C——, who is pushed to the front on the ground of his being a converted pick-pocket; and D——, who is emboldened as a reformed

drunkard to berate and denounce the church, through whose instrumentality he was originally picked from the gutter. And under the pathless ramblings of such men, and unshocked by their coarse familiarities, infatuated groups of believers become ecstatic, indulge in invectives against churches, and work themselves up into a frenzy of indignation against every one not to their liking; which might prove harmful to the peace and order of society were it not that the frenzy, being only superficial and developed for the occasion, usually evaporates in the vaporings of excited speech.

These exhibitions are apparently unpreventable and uncontrollable. Churches thus far have been powerless to restrain them. Their persuasions and entreaties have had no effect upon them, and have only served to emphasize their own impotence. Ministers have hardly dared remonstrate with their members, particularly if uneducated, when they have betrayed a drift toward extreme views of personal perfectibility, as they have learned by experience that "the anger of a woman scorned" is as a soothing zephyr in comparison with the unreasoning indignation of self-conceited ignorance when sanctification is questioned. Direct interference will probably never be of avail. It has not been often attempted. Mere authority has always failed, and can never succeed. Other means must be relied on and employed. But the church must not forget that the inability to provide them and to use them, reflects injuriously on her character and dignity. Society is inclined to judge her hastily by the excesses and extravagancies of those who were brought into the religious life through her endeavors, however now they may re-

pudiate her fellowship and offices. Extraordinary and erratic declarations and doings have in them a fascination, and while the quiet daily routine of devotion may pass unobscured, the opposite challenges attention and by its very garishness invites criticism. From its unavoidable loudness and showiness it comes in a special sense to be for many a distinctive mark, if not *the* distinctive mark, of Christianity, and it is not to be wondered at, as it is not necessarily followed by any special benefits, religious or moral, to the community, that thoughtful people should hesitate more and more to embrace a faith not particularly distinguished for its sanity. The aberrations and excrescences which have disfigured and misinterpreted Christianity during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, are in a very large degree responsible for the checks and bounds which have arrested its victorious march. This fact ought to be seriously pondered. If the church is lame and inefficient where her own members are concerned, how can she hope to prevail with the community outside? Disregarded, flouted, and, in particular instances, caricatured at home, how can she expect to be respected abroad? When she comes to realize that the measure of her success within will determine the measure of her success without, then the beginning of a fresh start in her onward career will be made, and not until then.

These depressing and disquieting details indicate with more sombre impressiveness than mere statistics the nature and extent of the barriers which thus far the church has been unable to surmount. If it can be shown that I have overestimated their magnitude and gravity, I shall be grateful. I have written according

to my light, and after the most careful inquiry, and, need I add, with a sincere desire to make out the best possible case for the church consistent with my own integrity. I have every reason to place her condition in the most favorable light, and not one to prompt the least misrepresentation. It may be intimated that it would have been safer and more expedient to confine myself to census reports and figures, and not to lay bare the inconsistencies and evils which impair her strength and diminish her efficiency. But I beg leave to suggest that we are approaching a crisis in religious development, and that to meet it successfully calls for something more than statistics. The church cannot remain indefinitely as she is. It is impossible for her hold on the world to increase or even to continue by appealing to past victories. She must establish her right to enduring power by present and ever-widening achievements. But she will never realize the importance of new endeavors unless she is made to feel the pressure and understand the character of existing limitations. These heretofore have not been sufficiently discussed. The fear has been entertained that the exposures involved would discredit the church irredeemably in the eyes of society. The policy of silence, consequently, has been pursued, and multitudes of believers have been hushed to sleep in a fool's paradise. In this conspiracy of illusion it is best not to join, and I have penned what I have that we may be delivered from its benumbing influence, and may see the situation exactly as it is. This is the only safe course, this is the wisest and most dignified policy—if that may be termed policy which only has in it a straightforward purpose to accomplish.

So much, then, in explanation and indication of the account here given of church limitations, which now must be supplemented by an inquiry into their origin, an inquiry which will prepare the way for the consideration of the brighter side and for the various recommendations to be presented in the chapter on the religious message of the nineteenth century to the twentieth, with which this volume closes.

Some of the reasons assigned for the conditions I have described are extraordinary in their childishness. Probably on no other theme do intelligent people talk and write more confidently and with less thoughtfulness and precision than on this. We are assured by one gentleman that the trouble lies mainly with the preaching. He condemns the philosophical sermon as unneeded by cultured people and as being beyond the range of the vulgar. He excoriates the exegetical sermon as consisting in large part of "theological sweepings," and as an insult to the mind, "which has inherited from generations of Bible-reading ancestors a sub-conscious or reflex knowledge of the Bible." And he has as little patience with topical preaching, which he characterizes as the sensational method of appealing to the masses. He concedes that evangelical preaching is indispensable and to be encouraged. But he does not explain its merits, nor reveal the special charm of preaching that is not philosophical, biblical, or topical. He attaches great importance to philanthropy, and in this he shares with others in the belief that the success of the church has been restricted because she does not have a tramp's lodging-house and a wood-yard in connection with every meeting-house. While we cannot go so far as this, we

too hold that in a sense the church should be "an institution of benevolence and a haven of rest and comfort for any who are in need of human sympathy." But statistics prove that the "wood-yard" scheme does not in any perceptible degree fill up the vacant pews, neither does it multiply Christians, though not unlikely it is prolific in paupers. If the business of the church is primarily and principally of an eleemosynary character, then from the apostles' day down to very recent times she has been singularly deceived as to her mission. She has through most of her history considered herself a spiritual agency, an organization set apart for the religious training and quickening of mankind, and, while not permitted to neglect the body, nor to decline to advocate the cause of the unfortunate, as the one witness appointed by God, to protest against the usurpations of the flesh. And the real issue at the present hour is not as the "bread and butter" theorists seem to imagine, to account for her failure to meet the ever-increasing demand for food and clothing, but to explain why, with her unparalleled benefactions, she is apparently unequal to the task of spiritually renewing the masses of the people. Hunger is removed by food, and consequently lack of food is the cause of hunger. But here is a condition,—vacant pews, meagre congregations, arrested progress,—and repeated experiments have shown that almsgiving has not been able to change it, and the logical inference is that the withholding of physical necessaries is not primarily responsible for its existence. I grant, and have already so argued, that the lack on the part of the church of direct concern for the social well-being of the people is to be censured, and, naturally enough, impairs

her influence. But this is a very different thing from the measures proposed by those who would convert her into an agency for the quieting of social discontent through the administration of excessive bounty. An eminent philanthropist not long ago bequeathed a large sum to be used by a religious organization on behalf of the poor, and running through his last will and testament are expressions which warrant the conclusion that he perceived the social discontent that exists, and believed that the church through liberal donations to the indigent would be able to repress its more revolutionary manifestations, and safeguard the modern capitalistic system. But such are not her offices. It is not for her to deceive the people, nor for her by a bribe in the form of food and clothing to hush the reasonable demands for such social conditions as contribute to the formation of independent manhood; and it is not for her to degrade while she feeds. And if she adopts so paltry a scheme, they whom she humiliates and degrades, while accepting the gifts, will despise the hand by which they are conferred.

Others who attempt to account for the existing religious situation gravely inform us that it is due to the members failing to shake hands with strangers, or to the adoption of the pew system for the purposes of revenue, or to the decline of pastoral visitation, or to a growing indisposition on the part of Christians to talk with sinners, or to the frequency with which congregations are appealed to for pecuniary assistance. It is not easy to accept these explanations. What a comment they are on a religion that is recognized as proceeding from God, as containing in its teachings

the deepest and most exalted spiritual philosophy, as furnishing the sinner an atonement, and as pledging to the saint the resources of infinite benevolence for his present protection and future felicity. To think that this magnificent moral marvel is arrested in its stupendous mission, or at least is impeded and restrained because hand-shaking is not commonly practised, or because clergymen are unable to tramp, tramp from house to house, or because pews are rented, or because some other trivial conventionalism prevails, is to think what is almost an inexecusable insult to our intelligence. The idea that an inspired Faith, with the Might of the eternities back of it, should falter and be dismayed in the face of such trivialities is too shallow for serious consideration.

Of course, pastors should shepherd the flock, and Christians should be cordial with each other and with strangers, and meeting-houses should be made as free as possible to all; but it borders on the grotesque to suppose that the destiny of such a religion as Christianity is determined by these or similar inferior and subordinate details. It is possible that in some localities where they are neglected, and where special abuses have crept into church administration, the failures we deplore are accentuated and intensified. But these instances do not warrant a general inference that they reveal the real cause, operating throughout Christendom, of the limitations we have contemplated. There are large congregations and remarkable prosperity where handshaking is not a means of grace and is practically unknown, where pastors rarely visit save among the sick and dying, where pews are rented and

rented at high figures, and where hospitable entertainment is given to frequent appeals for money. And there are other congregations that are meagre in proportions and in a condition bordering on impecuniosity, and that are neither distinguished for conversions nor generosity, where the seats are free, where effusiveness and hand-grasping have had imparted to them almost the mysterious efficacy of a sacrament, where there is much labored talk about the Holy Spirit, and where the minister wanders restlessly from house to house and is found everywhere except in his study. We are compelled, therefore, to conclude, that however valuable these amenities, accessories, and social services may be, as there are frequent instances of flourishing churches where they are not esteemed so highly as they should be, and as they do not always lend themselves to the same results, the principal cause of church failure must be sought elsewhere.

By not a few skeptical individuals it is unhesitatingly attributed to the growing intelligence of the age, which indisposes multitudes to accept the teachings of an alleged supernatural religion. This theory, however, is hardly defensible. It leaves out of sight the fact that a very large proportion of those who are unreached by Christian ministrations are not particularly enlightened, and certainly are not better informed and more thoughtful and acute than the devout believers of former times, or, indeed, of our own ; and that numbers of the educated and cultured are among the foremost to rush into the advocacy of the most incredible marvels, such as spiritism, so long as they are not propagated on the authority of the Bible. Moreover, it is

the constant observation of clergymen that, while individuals may remain away from the church, and while occasionally they may display a splenetically cynical mood when conversing on the subject of religion, in hours of supreme trial and suffering they more frequently than otherwise turn to God for deliverance and comfort. And then it should be remembered that many of the most intellectual and scholarly men are today sincerely attached to the great Faith symbolized by the cross. From all of which it follows that increasing intelligence is not responsible for whatever of hindrance checks the advance of the church at present. We may concede all that can reasonably be adduced on the other side, and yet this assurance may remain unimpaired. And, if I may presume to criticise, I fear that hosts of people have been encouraged in the religious indifference they exhibit by the constant intimations they receive of their superior mental endowments and attainments. They, therefore, assume a subconscious knowledge of the Bible to exist, which somehow rarely, if ever, becomes conscious, or saves them from pitiable disclosures of their ignorance on sacred themes. They do not study. They do not realize the need for inquiry. And my deliberate judgment is that more people in all classes of society are alienated from the church because they are unacquainted with the teachings of Christ than on account of their superior intelligence.

But wherefore the reluctance to take up religious investigation? Why should there be hesitancy, bordering frequently on aversion, to the careful and thoughtful consideration of the highest themes? These ques-

tions lead directly to the main issue. For that which indisposes the mind to serious reflection, and that seems to preoccupy it also, doubtless depresses the spiritual life, diverts attention from spiritual observances, and acts as a poisoning and stupefying atmosphere on the world at large. And what is this deadening and subtle force? How shall it be named? By what terms shall it be defined? If we call it the age-spirit, or the overmastering temper and tendency of the times, still we need to know its precise character.

We are taught by astronomy that our solar system is heliocentric and not, as formerly supposed, geocentric. But in the human social order this is now reversed, and the heliocentric, which was once dominant, has been supplanted by the geocentric. The earlier Christian centuries were overshadowed by the religious idea, and they grew and were shaped by theories, aims, and schemes which were supposed to be more or less truly emanations from the heavens. God, Christ, the judgment, were rarely lost sight of, and these were so often misapprehended or perverted that they became the means and inspiration to abominations and monstrous cruelties. A reaction followed this extreme, and at times pernicious, subjection to what was considered the supernatural; and at the beginning of the nineteenth century, earth, with its pursuits, its pleasures, and prosperity, moved into the foreground, and the social order from that hour gradually became, what it is to-day, pre-eminently geocentric. This revolution, however, was not the result of infidelity or atheism, but was the simple and natural effect of new estimates of human dignity and importance, and of mechanical inventions which

marked the birth of our era, and which held out the promise of improved temporal conditions for all. The masses then began to perceive that they had a heritage in this world, and that for the first time its possession appeared possible. There was no widespread defection from Christianity prompting onward to conquer earth. This was not necessarily an irreligious movement, although there were parties who made it the occasion of demonstrations against the church and its teachings. It was rather in the main a new appreciation of the secular, and of the privilege of man, and of his obligation as well, to make his present habitation as comfortable as possible, and to derive from it every rational enjoyment. The point of view was changed. Instead of living for eternity, men and women began to live for time, believing that obligations fulfilled on this side of death would prepare for the rewards on the other. Instead of trying to enrich heaven with good works they undertook to improve earth; and instead of estimating creeds and cults by their alleged supernatural origin, they came to judge them by their normal action on the natural. And thus was developed, not only the geocentric order of modern society, but the geocentric spirit, which in the last analysis accounts for most of the limitations, if not for all, which have narrowed the successes of the church in the nineteenth century.

It is not hastily to be concluded that no advantages have arisen from this higher estimate of the temporal, or that it is entirely alien to the doctrine of Jesus Christ. Unquestionably it has lent itself to many needed reforms, and has proven a potent factor in bettering the environments of slum-submerged thousands. Also, as we have

shown in an earlier lecture,[1] the Saviour by his social teachings refutes the calumny that he despised the present world, would have his disciples despise it, and made no provision for its improvement. What he did was to protest against its being made everything, and supreme as a motive and ambition in the conduct of life, not to deride it, or rage against it after the style of the anchorites. The error of earlier times lay in making it nothing; the error of the present lies in making it too much. In both instances the true sense of fitting proportions and relationships is obscured or confused. The spiritual and moral are of supreme importance, and what we shall eat or drink or wear of inferior moment; but these things have also in them a value not to be scorned. To harmonize and blend the demands of the two, and to terminate their seeming antagonisms, ought to be the chief business of philosophers and prophets; and when this end has been achieved the perfect civilization will have been attained. But in the meanwhile, earth, by a most extraordinary vagary, has eclipsed, partially at least, the sun on which it depends for life and light. The secular is in the ascendency, and not as a premeditated revolt against the Faith of the Cross, but as the outcome of sudden visions of temporal prosperity and happiness, which have charmed and bewildered multitudes, and which for the time being have come to be rated higher than the spiritual. It is hardly gracious to heap unmeasured blame on the infatuated masses. The world for ages has been to the overwhelming majority a very inhospitable place; and now that means have been provided for its improvement, and the people

[1] Section V., "The Social Awakening of the Church."

generally are free to use them, indignation may well restrain itself if excited multitudes rush pell-mell onward, forgetful of everything else, in their intense desire to obtain their share of possible temporal blessings. To save them from the fanaticism of secularism is a manifest duty; but in view of the bitter past, when their frenzy for earthly gain and good is criticised, the criticism may well be tempered with commiseration.

The geocentric spirit, from the standpoint of Christianity, cannot be commended, and can only be countenanced when it is brought into subjection to those restrictions which were imposed on it by Christ himself; for to its undue indulgence we are compelled to attribute the various discouraging aspects of church endeavor in the nineteenth century. Its prevalence explains in no small degree why so many thousands of people never or rarely enter the house of God. Multitudes are exhausted by the unnatural strain they are under during the week, and when Sunday comes they have not energy sufficient to meet its sacred requirements. Not a few are compelled, by what are regarded as the exigencies of the new civilization, to work on the day which a gracious Providence appointed from the beginning for rest. Others, when released from toil, plead that they should recuperate their physical energies on Sunday by excursions into the country, or by the enjoyment of innocent diversions. To supply the entertainments, to keep open the shops, and to furnish means of conveyance and newspapers for reading, call for an army of laborers, who in their turn are deprived of the blessings which come from Sunday observance. In this way throngs of people are kept busy, and the example set

leads many persons, who need no rest and never do anything to cause them fatigue, to demand a respite from everything like church services. And it likewise tends to make professors of religion less scrupulous as to the manner in which the Lord's Day is kept.

Back of all these neglects and perversions, and adequately accounting for them, there is the evident impression that the claims of earth, of business, of material interests, are foremost, and ought not to be set aside even for a few hours by those of a different order, though they may assume to be paramount. So anxious is the average man to obtain possession of the present world, so imperative does he regard the obligation to secure what he can of its resources, that he will tax himself so seriously as to unfit him for religious functions, and will not hesitate to set aside a divine ordinance if he imagines it impedes his temporal prosperity. This is written without any intention of sanctioning the extreme Sabbatarian views of seventeenth century Puritans. The author knows very well that their views were not countenanced by the fathers of "the blessed Reformation," English or Continental; that they were not advocated by the Confession of Augsburg; that Cranmer considered every approach to them as the appointments only of the civil magistrate; and that Calvin thought so little of them that he used to play bowls at Geneva on Sunday. But one excess does not justify another. It is not necessary that we should sanction superstitious traditions, when we plead for a decent observance of the Lord's Day; for such an observance as shall relieve the people from the exacting cares of toil, as shall restore to the weary world the consciousness of spiritual reali-

ties, and afford the needed opportunity to seek God in his courts and to share in the blessedness of solemn worship. And when the community shall again realize the value of this recognition, then we shall hear less and less of neglected sanctuaries, and more and more of glad multitudes thronging the churches of Jesus Christ.

To this earth-spirit may also be traced much that is unattractive in the religious life of to-day. Family prayers are not abandoned because confidence is lost in their efficacy, but because, as a rule, the head of the house has no time, or imagines that he has none, for their reverent presentation. Business is absorbing, early engagements must be kept, and he rushes down town without first seeking the divine blessing on his home. He justifies himself after the manner of his age, pleading that competition is so great and trade interest so imperative that he cannot afford the time to gather wife and children around the altar, apparently oblivious to the fact that he is thus unconsciously recognizing the right of this world to supreme consideration. With this homage to the temporal in his heart, it is not hard to understand why he tries to make his church tributary to its over-lordship. Thus governed, he and many with him, convert the meeting-house into a kind of aristocratic assembly room, where the poor are not wanted lest they mar the social prestige of the elect; while others, feeling the effect of the same principle, are reluctant to give of their means lest they deprive themselves of worldly comforts and worldly distinctions. Here, likewise, we have an explanation of the commercialism that has wrought so much mischief in the modern church. The possession of money often deter-

mines the importance of its members. Money, or rather lack of it, is more responsible than anything else for brief pastorates; and the value attached to it is the cause why an equivalent for it, in refreshments or fancy goods, is so often exacted when large sums have to be secured for special objects. Moreover, the distinctions which grow out of varying degrees of wealth and the extraordinary veneration it inspires is somewhat fatal to genuine humility. The rich man, if he has no wish to assert himself, is so deferred to by his brethren in his church, that he can scarcely fail to feel a trifle lifted up. He is tempted to have his own way; and then poorer people to show that they are as good as he is will strive to have theirs, and when they can acquire conspicuity in no other manner, affect perfection or the advocacy of some peculiar and startling fad. Often in professing singular unworldliness these persons are only revealing a type of very offensive worldliness. They seek and acquire notoriety, if not distinction, by their method, and become the center of curious wonder-seekers; and like some so-called "divine healers" recently exposed, make out of their proposed heavenly gifts a remarkably handsome earthly income. And thus much that is grotesque and ludicrous, childish and foolish, priggish and pragmatical, in churches grows out of the hold that geocentricism has upon their members.

This tyranny of the earthy also is responsible for the vacillating policies, the hesitancy to condemn public wrongs, and the subserviency of many modern ecclesiastics to the whims and wishes of imperialistic demigods. "To get and to hold" is the watchcry of this strenuous age, and nothing deterred by the commandment of

Christ, the church here and there writes it over her altars and enshrines it in her schemes and ambitions. She too, in a larger sense than is generally appreciated, is in the vulgar scramble for riches and honors, and is setting the seal of her approval on what not inappropriately may be called the Gospel of Mannerism. How anxious she is to secure government patronage and pecuniary assistance. With what courtier-like fawning she is conveniently silent when outrages are being perpetrated by the ruling classes, and with what silvery eloquence she palliates war and excuses the rapaciousness of factions and combinations. Has she not been promised the kingdoms of this world and all the glory of them, and why should she be too scrupulous and decline to worship the devil just a trifle, especially as he calls himself an "Angel of Light," when by so doing she can all the more speedily gain her own? She does not apparently perceive that when she does this she loses her hold on parties, on rulers, on kings, who mock at her affected sanctity, and pursue their own way in utter contempt of the noble principles which Christ proclaimed, and which she is supposed to represent. And when certain of the denominations, like the Quakers, Baptists, and Congregationalists, protest against being degraded by her mercenary sycophancies, society ridicules them, rebukes them for lack of sagacity, and scorns them as being behind the age. And then we wonder at her limitations, and institute grave inquiries into the causes which have operated against her achieving more unrestricted successes in the nineteenth century. In writing in this way I am not charging personal greed on her great officials; I am only showing that she too

is swept away by the spirit of the age, is swayed by it, is submerged by it, and that in seeking, like all the rest, to gain the world for herself, she impairs her power of protest against many pernicious and corrupt practices which are debasing and disgracing modern civilization.

With secularistic ideals and visions in the ascendency and charming mankind it is easy to understand the comparative failure of the church to elevate politics, purify art, and to restrain the encroachments of debilitating luxury. To obtain the upper hand, to rule, to bear sway, to occupy the chief seats of distinction and authority—when such ambitions are sanctified by the accepted philosophy of life, ordinary moralities do not count for much and are readily swept aside. If political parties are not usually straightforward, scrupulous, and consistent, and if they are commonly tricky, shifty, and insincere, it is always to be remembered that they are only following in the wake of public sentiment, and, like many others, are mainly striving for their own success and not primarily for their country's good, although it must be admitted that they have the happy faculty of esteeming everything that falls out to their own advantage as necessarily conducive to the well-being of their country. Thus, also, some prominent corporations and trusts have a way of identifying the national prosperity with their own increasing gains, and then of persuading themselves that it is purely in the interests of patriotism that they spend millions to secure the election of those who by tariffs and special legislation will protect and favor their particular interests. Nor are the leaders of these great commercial combinations to be regarded as necessarily worse than their

contemporaries. In many instances they are morally the peers of their harshest critics, and are walking honestly according to their light. But the fault is with the light on which they rely and by which they shape their conceptions of duty. It is earthborn, not heavenly; and may be likened rather to the Aurora, which according to Dalton and Fusinieri, is a terrestrial phenomenon due to the circulation of the magnetic fluid around the globe, rather than to the shining of the sun. If this world is the foremost thing, if not everything, is it not excusable to strain a point that its possession may be secured as promptly as possible? And if it is only right that its claims should overshadow and eclipse the demands of every other conceivable world, ought we not to fit it up as comfortably as we can, crowd it with attractions, and fill it with the most exquisite delights? Why not convert it into a veritable "Palace of Art," and be guided by the significant suggestions of Tennyson?

> I built my soul a lordly pleasure house,
> Wherein at ease for aye to dwell,
> I said, "O Soul, make merry and carouse,
> Dear soul, for all is well!"
>
> To which my soul made answer readily:
> "Trust me, in bliss I shall abide
> In this great mansion, which is built for me,
> So royal—rich and wide."

Many, even multitudes, are thinking if not speaking in this way, and being human and being governed by their senses, they are not satisfied with hallowed joys, but crave the beautiful, the sensuously beautiful. They are not content with the ecstasy described by the poet:

O all things fair to sate my various eyes,
O shapes and hues that please me well,
O silent faces of the Great and Wise,
My Gods, with whom I dwell.

Something more is craved and sought. Man, under the spell of a theory which has almost acquired the indisputable authority of an axiom, and which incites him to make the most of this present world, instinctively infers that he is free to gratify his nature, and as he is not all spirit, he seeks through some refined means (though not too refined) to gladden the animal that is a part of himself. And that the thrills of pleasure conventionally forbidden may not be wholly untasted, and that the delirium of the senses may not be entirely unknown, he inclines to foster a literature, a drama, an art, which are very far from being as "chaste as ice" or "as pure as snow." Deep down, therefore, in the carnal soul of civilized communities are to be found the roots of this luxurious and rank vegetation, which is supposed to be allied to the "fair humanities," but whose leaves are not for the healing of the nations. And the atmosphere in which it flourishes, and without which it would sicken and die, is that very false philosophy, which, like the poisonous vapors of the Avernian lake in the Roman Campagna, is fatal to a nobler and sweeter growth. This is also the atmosphere that rests as a death-pall on the whole of modern life, that impedes the very breath of religion, and that paralyzes the energies of the church and imposes limitations on her many activities.

The explanation thus given of one of the most curious and solemn problems of the century—why organized Christianity, having wrought so many beneficent won-

ders has not wrought more; why, having advanced so far, she has not advanced farther; and why her successes have always come short of completeness—carries with it the reasonable and inevitable inference that the anomaly can only be brought to an end by the removal of its cause. Various measures may be proposed, of more or less value, for the relief of the church from her embarrassment and for the removal of obstacles from the path of her progress. Some such remedies have already been alluded to, but none of them, however admirable and desirable, can accomplish more than a partial and local improvement unless they are fitted to restore the spiritual to its supreme place in the affairs of life. By cheap contrivances devised by the acute and astute sensationalist, or by the genuine eloquence of the brilliant preacher, chapels and meeting-houses may be crowded to the point of discomfort, and newspapers may assure a credulous public that at last the masses are reached; but if to these throngs the secular is still foremost, and if even in the sanctuary they have not escaped from the tyranny of the temporal, the gain, after all, is not very encouraging, and does not promise any widespread resuscitation of power. The transformation must be more radical and comprehensive than this. We need to know how the present bondage may be brought to an end, how the age may be emancipated from its too great infatuation with the things of time and sense, and how the church herself may rise from the low levels of earthly ambitions and desires.

Nothing short of this will suffice. I am sure that Count Leo Tolstoy perceives this, and intends to show forth this conviction in his last novel. He therefore

portrays a dead world, a dead church, a dead soul, and sets over against this decay and rottenness the startling declaration of Christ: "I am the resurrection and the life." The resurrection! yes, that is the need, the imperative demand, the indispensable marvel, without which the glory of the future will be more and more the glory of the grave. St. Paul in his day strove that he might attain to "a resurrection out from among the dead"; and the same agony of desire must now possess God's people, not only for themselves but for others, if the coming century is to witness the final triumph of the Cross. In this persuasion the late Prof. Alexander Balmain Bruce thought and wrote. He too saw clearly the futility of the ordinary means advocated and relied on for the purpose of transcending the present limitations of church success. The power and spell of the world he realized must be broken. How this could be done was a subject that frequently occupied his mind, and in his last work he brought his reflections on what is thus essential to a close, and in a few sentences, which fittingly may be quoted as we pass to the final chapter of this volume, wherein we are to take note of the many assuring tokens of religious prosperity and set over against the relative failures of Christianity her manifold and magnificent successes, he clearly indicated what must be done to secure deliverance:

> From all this it would seem to follow that the path of progress for the future must lie along the lines of Christ's teaching; that the least thing men who seek the good of our race can do is to make themselves heirs to the thoughts of Jesus concerning God, man, the world, and their relations, and work these out under modern conditions. Reversions to the things behind is surely a

mistake. No good can come of a return with Schophenhauer to the pessimistic despair of Buddhism, or, with other modern thinkers, to the dualism of Zoroaster, or, under the sturdy leadership of a Huxley, to the grim, defiant mood of Stoicism. Such movements are to be regarded as excusable but temporary reactions, and the Christian attitude is to be viewed as that which must gain more and more the upper hand.

XII

THE PAST AND FUTURE

Though hearts brood o'er the Past, our eyes
With smiling Futures glisten ;
For lo ! our day bursts up the skies !
Lean out your souls and listen !
The world is rolling Freedom's way,
And ripening with her sorrow ;
Take heart ! who bear the Cross to-day
Shall wear the Crown to-morrow.

—*Gerald Massey.*

Despair not thou as I despair'd
Nor be cold gloom thy prison !
Forward the gracious hours have fared,
And see ! the sun is risen !

He breaks the winter of the past ;
A green new earth appears.
Millions, whose life in ice lay fast,
Have thoughts and smiles and tears.

What though there still need effort, strife ?
Though much be still unwon ?
Yet warm it mounts, the hour of life !
Death's frozen hour is done.

—*Matthew Arnold.*

XII

THE RELIGIOUS MESSAGE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY TO THE TWENTIETH

FINAL words are usually impressive, and thoughtful people with reverence pause to receive a parting message from the dying. But when the strength is failing, and the poor lips are quivering, the communication may be somewhat indistinct, and may need for its interpretation the kindly offices of one who has intimately known and has closely watched the expiring saint or sage. Familiar with his life, acquainted with his peculiarities, understanding his beliefs and principles, such a friend is fitted to take up his almost incoherent words and broken sentences, and putting them together, construct for the serious listener the warnings he would convey and the comfort he would impart. A similar service it is my desire to render the old century, now almost gone, inarticulate, and nearly dead. It may not be possible to catch the precise meaning of the feeble whisperings of the present hour, but recalling the movements of the past hundred years, their failures and triumphs, their losses and gains, with the changes they have brought to society and the church, it ought not to be surpassingly difficult to make out their real significance.

Schiller declares that

> Often do the spirits
> Of great events stride on before the events,
> And in to-day already walks to-morrow.

And a certain school of rationalists insists that what we usually regard as prophetism in the Scriptures is not at all vaticinal in character, but only an accurate discernment of the logical connection between that which is and that which necessarily is to be. As the mariner from long experience may be qualified to forecast the morrow's weather, so, it is claimed, the Hebrew seer, from the gathering clouds accumulated around the political horizon, could easily foresee, the moral universe being as precisely ordered as the material, what of distress and doom must inevitably follow a nation's degeneracy.

While I do not believe the facts warrant us in excluding the other and higher form of vaticination from the predictions of the Old Testament prophets, I am prepared to concede that they and others may have been able to see the foreshadows of future events in what was taking place around them, and to speak of their approach in terms of assurance and confidence. And had we sagacity enough, and could we comprehend the nature and bearing of all the forces that have been operative in the history of the past hundred years, we likewise could draw aside the curtain and reveal to your astounded gaze the transcendent achievements and transforming developments of the new age, whose birththroes are now exciting the solicitude of a doubting world. To such wisdom as this we do not lay claim, nor can we "look into the seeds of time, and say which grain will grow and which will not." Our office is one of far less pretentiousness. It is not for us to anticipate the coming years, nor to presume that we are able to cast a horoscope of their varying fortunes. But if from the

stars we cannot surely learn what is to be, we may at least from them infer what ought to be; and if from their shining and their position in the heavens we cannot derive a prophecy, we can at least, with some degree of certainty, deduce a lesson for our immediate guidance. And if we dare not attempt to trace the outlines of the "to-morrow" that already walks in the "to-day," we still may venture to interpret the changes, admonitions, and encouragements which are being whispered by the latter in the ear of the former, and convey with some degree of accuracy the religious message of the nineteenth century to the twentieth.

The preliminary or preamble, so to speak, of this message, breathes a triumphant spirit, and dwells on the hopefulness of the present outlook. Christianity was never more extended than she is now, her outposts were never farther from her center, and her circumference was never so vast. If there are some signs of heart-failure where vitality should be strongest, and if here and there are traces of wasting tissue, still the continued aggressiveness and the constant expansiveness of the Faith warrant the most optimistic expectations. Those of our readers who recall the dreary and depressing prospects that confronted the church a hundred years ago, if they will only contrast with those dark times the brightness of the present hour, will perceive that she has not only gained in power and influence, but has conquered for herself a position fruitful in unmeasured possibilities. Then she was but entering on her missionary operations; then she was but inaugurating her numberless benefactions; but now she is the greatest of all imperialisms, girding the globe

with a broad zone of light; and now she witnesses the flowering of her philanthropy in the radiant hues and sweet fragrance of modern humanitarianism, which, however, unhappily often ignores or denies the roots whence it sprang. The Boden Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford has recently assigned Christianity the foremost place numerically among the religions of the world. He states that Buddhism has only one hundred million adherents, and not four hundred millions as has hitherto been supposed. In a higher class he places Confucianism and then Hinduism, and lower still Mohammedanism, and between the two last named, Buddhism.[1] But over and above the highest he ranks the Christian Faith, which is still multiplying its converts, while other religions give evident tokens of decay. In 1800 the total number of Christians in the world was set down at about two hundred millions; in 1900 the grand total exceeds five hundred millions.[2]

During the nearly ten centuries of almost exclusive papal dominion Christianity gained only about eighty-five millions. Since the birth of Protestantism, a period about one-third as long, it has gained nearly six times as much. And since the great religious quickening of Protestantism under the Wesleys and Whitefield in the middle of the last century, it has gained three hundred and forty-five millions.

It is also interesting to note in this connection, and perhaps as indicative of future religious predominance, that two centuries ago there were only thirty-two millions in the population of the whole world under Protestant governments; now there are five hundred and

[1] Alkander, "Epist. of St. John." Expository Bible, p. 110.

[2] See Tables in Dorchester's "Religious Progress," pp. 649, 650.

twenty millions. Then Roman Catholic rulers had three times as many subjects as Protestant governors, but now they have less than half as many. The New York "Independent" throws much light on Christian progress in the United States by its carefully prepared statistical information lately given in its columns. From this we gather that the approaching census will probably fix the population of the country in the neighborhood of seventy millions, being a gain of eight millions in ten years or about thirteen per cent. The census of 1890 reported a church-membership of twenty million six hundred and tweve thousand eight hundred and six; the estimate now is that this year, 1900, it will number twenty-seven million seven hundred and ten thousand and four, a gain of over seven millions, or about thirty-four per cent. These figures may not be altogether reliable, but probably it will be found that the proportion of increase will be confirmed, and the ratio of thirty-four per cent. in favor of the church's growth as against thirteen per cent. in favor of the country's increase in population, will be maintained. This showing on the whole is very encouraging, and indicates, notwithstanding deplorable mistakes and failures, that Christianity is a growing and advancing power in the world.

But there are other tokens of prosperity and progress. Among these I rank the tendency toward the democratic principle in church government. During the century, almost imperceptibly, the lay element has gained in influence even within hierarchical communions. The representative councils of the great denominations are becoming less and less exclusively

clerical in their constituency and control. Doctor Wace, the principal of King's College, London, a few months ago read a very striking paper before a church congress, in which he showed that the dissenting bodies in England had multiplied their membership immensely during the last one hundred and fifty years, that they were now in "a position numerically very considerably advanced in comparison with the Church of England"; and looking abroad, and taking in the whole outside field, he said that he found something less than three and a half millions of English Church communicants to more than seventeen millions of Free Church-members. These statements confirm what I have said regarding the present drift. While the spirit of episcopacy has advanced in liberality, and while its laymen are being more and more charged with responsibility, there seems to be a deepening dislike for everything resembling clericalism, however tempered by considerate concessions.

Congregationalism is in the ascendency, that is, it is gaining in favor; and though there are many forces operating against it, still, in my opinion, to it belongs the future. This is rendered more probable by the ever-enlarging sphere of activity open to women in modern Christianity. Mrs. Fawcett has been helping the cause of the progress of women by her enlightened discussions of the value to them of academic advantages. In one of her recent public addresses she recalled the fact that two hundred years ago Defoe pleaded for such educational privileges as would tend to make a wife a real companion for her husband; and that a hundred years later Sidney Smith advocated the

same cause. But since then, what wonderful advances have been made. Were we discussing the great social changes of the nineteenth century, we would find here a most notable theme. We would show the new and exalted position gained by women in education, in literature, in art, in business, and in reform. But these domains lie beyond the scope of our present undertaking. It is, however, a source of gratification to record that the progress of woman within the church has kept pace with her emancipation beyond its limits. She was never more actively or more freely engaged on behalf of Christ's kingdom than at this hour; and never did she have so potent a voice in the direction of its affairs as now. She is foremost in temperance reform; she is the chief inspiration in Sunday-school work; she is the leading force in philanthropy; and she is more closely allied to parish work as deaconess, missionary, or pastor's assistant, than ever in the past, unless we except the apostolic and sub-apostolic periods. Does not this prominence forecast yet greater and graver opportunities for the exercise of her devotion in the future? And as these open before her, and the burden of responsibility becomes heavier, will she not have a right to demand, and Christian men have no right to refuse, a part in the direct control of the church? In some denominations this she already enjoys; but in others, and ultimately in all, or at least in those where she presses forward and makes herself felt as a power for good, must she be accorded an equal place with man in the administration of ecclesiastical affairs. That is, in the nature of things, her enlargement and advancement make for the final triumph of the congregational principle.

As tending, likewise, in the same direction, witness the startling freedom of thought and of criticism on religious subjects now so common among laymen. They do not hesitate to have opinions of their own on such vexed questions as the inerrancy of the Scriptures, and they are less disposed than formerly to accept their faith without question on the authority of their spiritual guides. Nor is this independence restricted to Protestant communions. Occasionally it asserts itself even in the Roman Catholic Church. A striking illustration of its prevalence we have in the revolt of St. George Mivart against the *non possumus* of Cardinal Vaughan, which will come to be regarded as one of the most significant episodes in contemporaneous ecclesiastical history. The eminent scientist, who is himself a Catholic, published articles in the "Nineteenth Century" and the "Fortnightly," maintaining that a good Catholic can be a higher critic and to all intents and purposes a rationalist.[1] This leads the "Tablet," which is under the control of the cardinal, to take Doctor Mivart to task for his views, and this is done in so coarse a way as to call forth from the assailed this spirited protest:

> As grace supposes nature, so before I am a Catholic I am an English gentleman, and in that capacity I have been grossly outraged. The foul, vulgar, brutal personalities of the "Tablet," charging me with cowardice and willful, calumnious mendacity, are such that no man with a particle of self-respect could tolerate.

The cardinal straightway sends to the layman a profession of faith with the command that it must be signed

[1] Professor Mivart was still living when these words were uttered. His revolt, in the interests of truth, renders his death all the more to be lamented.

and the published articles be reprobated. To this the layman replies that he must be assured that the "inspiration and authorship of Holy Scripture," which he is required to acknowledge, "does not guarantee the truth and inerrancy of the statements so inspired." But his eminence will not yield. "This is to return to the old Protestant system of private judgment," he writes, "sign and recant." St. George answers back, "I categorically refuse to sign the profession of faith"; and in the London "Times" writes:

> A vast and impassable abyss yawns between Catholic dogma and science, and no man with ordinary knowledge can henceforth join the communion of the Roman Catholic Church, if he correctly understands what its principles and its teachings really are, unless they are radically changed.

The cardinal repeats the *non possumus*,—your position cannot be allowed,—and enforces it by suspension or excommunication; but fortunately for the professor he cannot add emphasis to his decree by handing him over to the civil power. The incident probably is closed, unless Doctor Mivart shall see fit by and by to recant. But his brave defiance indicates that others besides Protestants are claiming the right of private judgment, and that even its occasional exercise within the papal jurisdiction points unmistakably to the gradual emancipation of the laity from priestly dominance and to the final adoption of the congregational principle. And I regard this trend as wholesome and promising, because history has shown, and particularly the history of the last hundred years, that in proportion as church authority and power are taken from the few and committed to the many, and the more a people can be persuaded to

take part in the conduct of religious affairs, the purer and sweeter the administration becomes, and the less liable to a repetition of those tortuous policies and gross crimes which have done so much to discredit ecclesiastical government in former times.

This, however, is only one among other signs that the present outlook for Christianity is both assuring and flattering. Full of promise is the fact that the Christian nations, particularly the Protestant countries, are the most affluent and the most enterprising. The wealth they have accumulated is simply enormous. "Great Britain is by far the richest nation of the Old World," and yet the United States excelled her in this respect, ten years ago, by three hundred million dollars. "The wealth of the United States is phenomenal. In 1880 it was valued at forty-three billion six hundred and forty-two million dollars; more than enough to buy the Persian and the Turkish empires, the kingdoms of Sweden and Norway, Denmark and Italy, together with Australia, South Africa, and all South America." Thus wrote Rev. Josiah Strong in "Our Country" (1885); but the astounding figures he gives must have grown into almost incredible proportions within the last fifteen years. But the civilized world beyond the boundaries of the great republic has not been idle or unproductive, and consequently there are ampler resources at the disposal of mankind for humane and religious purposes than ever before. The munificent gifts of millionaires, like Carnegie, Rockefeller, Peabody, Sir Moses Montefiore, Baron Hirsch, and others equally generous, for the establishment of libraries, the founding of schools, the housing of the poor and relieving the suffering,

and the devotion of her money by Miss Helen Gould to the loftiest patriotic services, go far toward proving that these resources have not been accumulated in vain. Doctor Strong shows that at least one-fifth of the wealth amassed in the United States is owned by professed Christians. This, however, I believe, is an underestimate, for let us never forget that the Christian population constitutes the least wasteful and the most frugal and saving of our citizens. More likely the followers of our Lord in America control one-third of the nation's wealth, and adding to them the immense mass of people who sympathize with evangelical religion, together with their spiritual kindred in Europe, the totality must represent a financial power quite beyond the ability of all the heathen religions combined to match, a power practically capable of carrying to a successful issue the most gigantic undertakings.

The difference between the churches of to-day in this respect and the churches of a hundred years ago is almost incalculable. At that time, what with French Revolutions and Napoleonic wars, Europe was on the verge of insolvency, and every benevolent enterprise was reduced to sore embarrassment. The question then was: Where shall money be found to maintain the permanent institutions of society and supply the actual necessaries of life? Poverty was chronic, and even many of the great families in the old world were distressed for lack of means. Suffering was excessive, and relief was narrowed by the meagre revenues of the various European nations. And yet, with depleted treasuries, and confronted by financial difficulties, the beginning of the nineteenth century was distinguished

by the inauguration of the most ambitious Christian projects. It was then that the conquest of the world for Christ was undertaken, and it was then that societies were multiplied for the evangelization of England and America, and much-needed reforms were commenced for the general improvement of society. But if these great enterprises could be successfully launched in the dark days of monetary depression, now that the gloom has passed away, and the means at the disposal of the churches have become abundant, what achievements are there that cannot be accomplished? If so much could be attempted on so little, why should not more be triumphantly effected in this period of unexampled prosperity? The nineteenth century is saying to the twentieth:

> I was born poor; I die rich, and my vast estates descend to you. All the property I have accumulated at a cost of untold anxiety, labor, and anguish, I leave for you to manage and administer. You will find that it represents sufficient wealth, if wisely employed, and not squandered away on war, vice, and idle pomp, to transform society and evangelize the world. Great is your opportunity, great also your responsibility. No century before you began its career with so many advantages, none were the masters of such revenues, and none confronted a future so charged with momentous possibilities.

And it may be added that never before was the world so prepared for the labors of future reformers and Christians. It has enjoyed a century of education, and is more than ever responsive to the needs and sufferings of humanity. Gradually it has been trained to feel with increasing keenness for the woes of mankind, and it has been taught to appreciate the rights and to defend the liberties of all. "Within a few years one hundred and

eighty millions of Europeans have risen from a degraded and dissatisfied vassalage to the ranks of free, self-governing men, and one of their earliest concerns has been to provide the means of universal education."[1] This itself is a most hopeful sign, and indicates that the door is open wider than ever for Christianity to prosecute successfully her gracious mission. To her influence as revealed in the Wesleyan revivals, Professor Green, the historian, attributes much of the transformation through which society has passed since then, saying that this revival gave rise to

> A steady attempt, which has never ceased from that day to this, to remedy the guilt, the ignorance, the physical suffering, the social degradation of the profligate and the poor. . . The Sunday-schools established by Mr. Raikes, at Gloucester, at the close of the century, were the beginnings of popular education. By writings and by her own personal example, Hannah More drew the sympathy of England to the poverty and crime of the agricultural laborer. A passionate impulse of human sympathy with the wronged and afflicted raised hospitals, endowed charities, built churches, sent missionaries to the heathen, supported Benke in his plea for the Hindu, and Clarkson and Wilberforce in their crusade against the iniquity of the slave trade.[2]

That is, Christianity has been instrumental in thus refining and humanizing the world, a claim conceded by Carlyle, Lecky, and Martineau, and thus has opened the way for yet farther and nobler endeavors in the new age on which we are entering. She has created an atmosphere congenial to her aspirations; she has awakened expectations and sympathy by her acknowledged successes; and she is invited by the most favoring condi-

[1] Dorchester, "Problem of Religious Progress," p. 460.

[2] "History of English People," Vol. IV., p. 273.

tions to concentrate afresh her forces on the evils that yet hinder the complete emancipation of mankind. It is not for her to be discouraged and despondent. She is thresholding unquestionably an exacting and wonderful epoch; but there is every reason for her to believe that, if true to herself, she will be equal to every emergency.

Auspicious is this hour. It is a morning radiant with the glory of a brilliant day. Let us not lose heart. The old century reproves all disconsolate fancies and rebukes our wayward fears. It bids us contemplate fields ripe unto the harvest, and with its dying accents whispers, "hope." No one knew better its history, and no one was better fitted to interpret its significance, than the late Sir William Dawson, and we may, therefore, accept his optimistic confession as voicing this part of the message which the past is addressing to the future:

"I do not take a pessimistic view of things," he writes. "In my time I have seen so many abuses rectified, so many great evils overthrown, and so much done for the material and spiritual welfare of humanity, that I look forward to better things to come. I think many things now antagonistic to Christianity will share the fate of similar things in the past. At the same time, there are dangers ahead that may lead to great catastrophes for the time being. Yet somehow good seems to come out of great wars and other evils. The dangers that just now appear to threaten the world from political and military causes do not alarm me, because I have seen so many things come on like storms, pass away, and leave good behind. I am certainly prepared to testify that, all the time I have been in it, the world has really been advancing both in the removal of great evils and in the propagation of truth and light. The future is in the hand of God, and we may trust in him, more especially on his work through our divine Saviour and the Holy Spirit."

But the message is not wholly congratulatory. It is wider in its range and more serious in its import. Deriving wisdom from its varied experiences of success and failure, the nineteenth century counsels, admonishes, forewarns, in terms of the profoundest conviction. What the burden of its testimony is, as far as religion is concerned, religious people may well gravely ponder, for it involves and discloses the specific obligations that press upon them with the dawning of a new era. In the words of Lowell it reminds us:

> New times demand new measures and new men;
> The world advances, and in time outgrows
> The laws that in our fathers' days were best.

But what are these measures and these laws which should determine the activities of Christianity in the coming years?

They, first of all, exact that she shall do her own work, and shall not render it necessary or possible for outside agencies to usurp her functions, while she occupies herself with the infinitely meagre and petty. There is no doubt that of late many things that ought to have been done by churches have devolved on other societies, and for the simple reason that the churches have not seen fit to attempt their performance. In several great cities we have heard of committees being formed and of organizations being shaped for the purpose of restraining corruption, maintaining law and order, and suppressing social wrongs and social vices. Other associations have been created to look after tempted young men and women, to succor the destitute and friendless, and to advance the ethical interests of society. It is

not denied that many Christian people are directly enlisted in behalf of these important movements, or that they derive their very existence from the spirit of Christianity. But the natural feeling is that the churches themselves ought to undertake the reforms contemplated, and that in failing to do so they impair their own dignity and influence. Why have they been established if not to make the world better? Why should they exist at all if they are not to grapple with these very problems and difficulties which appeal to reputable citizens as demanding thoughtful attention? Surely this very business is their business, and if they were attending to it strictly, they would find employment for the highest gifts within their reach, and very soon would render it unnecessary for many among the most intelligent of their members to seek in men's clubs and women's clubs a means of doing something for the public good. As it is, not a few cultivated and broad-minded Christians drift into various fellowships where they think opportunities are afforded for the exercise of their business abilities not furnished by the churches. They have a practical turn, and prefer to devote themselves to such endeavors as call for sagacity, tact, and personal energy. Preaching is not their *forte*, and even Sunday-school teaching is not in their line; but they could render valuable service on a commission to repress vice, to preserve social order, or to purify the franchise. They have no particular interest in church parties, and are indisposed to engage in the trivial disputes over choirs, ice-cream and strawberry festivals, sewing-circle small talk and scandals, and the various minor details of church life which seem to fascinate so many pious souls. Looking on the religious

world they see so much prominence given to little, trivial things that they lose heart. They wish it were otherwise. But it is not, and they are dissatisfied. And in the meanwhile the outside community judges that Christianity is narrow, inefficient, and unequal to her mission, occupying her people with many matters of inferior moment instead of concentrating their energies on the higher and more important phases of her work. And this hesitancy gives rise to acrid criticisms, and extenuates, if it does not justify, such a summing up as Mr. Hensley Henson pens in a recent volume, when he says:

> The Jew in the nineteenth century rehearses the miserable fortune of the Huguenot in the eighteenth. The architects of infamy are the same, and once more Christ has to find his champions outside his own camp. A Zola now (as a Voltaire then) stands forth and undertakes the challenge. . . Continually the ecclesiastical conscience lags behind the general sense of right and the Lord's battles are won by unrecognized warriors.[1]

Such a reproach as this must become impossible in the future, if Christianity is to maintain her hold on strong and thoughtful men. She must not wait for a Zola to defend and succor those whom she should befriend. When she realizes this; and when she shall decline pusillanimously to stand aside, while self-constituted committees press forward to overcome evils she was founded to assail; and when she shall cease to find satisfaction and occupation in "trifles light as air," such as have engaged the attention of too many Catholic and Protestant churches, the former wasting their energies on questions concerning rites and ceremonies, and the latter in chatter on trumpery social

[1] "Thoughts for Critical Times in the Church."

ambitions—then she will draw to herself a much larger percentage of the masculine portion of society, and will be more than ever venerated by the masses of mankind. But as long as not a few of her representatives can find nothing nobler or more worthy of their prowess than to exhaust the vocabulary of denunciation against smoking, dancing, and friendly societies; and when they by their various conventions create the impression that they are more solicitious for their own perfection than for the advantage of a sin-stricken race; her fair name will be damaged, and her influence over intelligent, earnest people be diminished. The nineteenth century reminds the twentieth that it needs a religion that will rise to the level of its great opportunities, and becoming prophetic, she sees the desired change I have urged as actually realized in the Christianity of to-morrow, and breaks forth into a strain of exultation fittingly voiced by the immortal words of Milton:

> Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks; methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unsealing her long-abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms.[1]

Such a nation must Christianity make herself, and when she shall merge into this exalted State, while doubting souls may be apprehensive and fear that devotion to works greater than those which Christ per-

[1] "The Areopagitica."

formed may cause a falling away of the timid and the purblind, she shall steadily advance in majesty and might.

But if she is thus to advance she must also have regard to a condition of success which the last hundred years have brought into singular prominence. She must not only do her own work, but she must restrict herself to it, and not attempt to do the work of other institutions; or, in other terms, she must specialize. This rule is now followed by the leaders of industry and commerce, and by the chiefs of science and professional life. No one man, and no particular order of men, can do everything, any more than they can know everything. They can pretend as much as they like; but the larger their pretensions, the more consummate sciolists and bunglers they will probably prove to be. Society demands experts, and will not tolerate in serious vocations indexterity and unproficiency. The divisions and sub-divisions of pursuits which now prevail, and which did not exist three or four generations ago, contribute undoubtedly to greater exactness and efficiency; and the principle they involve is as applicable to religion as to any other sphere of thought, feeling, or activity. Why should a church assume to decide what is scientific and what is not? Why should she feel capable of determining the true methods of secular education, or of dictating the policies of national and international administrations? By what divine canon is she called on to become an expounder of art, music, and poetry? Who gave her such infallible wisdom that she can decide every moot point in philosophy and psychology without any particular preparation, and teach specialists their specialties though confessedly herself untaught?

The nineteenth century, out of many humiliating experiences, admonishes Christianity not to expect the twentieth to be so tolerant as it has been of this presumption. The old century does not question the right and duty of Christianity to insist on ethical instruction in the schools, to protest against the moral degradation which sometimes overtakes the æsthetical world, and to promote honesty, honor, and dignity in political affairs; but these legitimate functions are overdone when she busies herself with those phases of education, art, and government which can only be adequately treated by experts. Stubbs, in his "Constitutional History," says: "The Church cannot engross the work of education without some danger to liberty; the State cannot engross it without some danger to religion; the work of the Church without liberty loses half its value; the State without religion does only half its work." That is, religion has to do with instruction on its ethical side, and on that side she ought to speak with authority, while recognizing that there is another on which the qualified and equipped pedagogue has a right to speak with authority also. Within her own eminent domain she is mistress, but nowhere else. If she does well and thoroughly what is expected of her there, she will challenge the admiration and veneration of enlightened humanity. But if she seems to be a constant meddler in outside spheres of thought, officiously interfering with what only remotely concerns her, sedulously caring for other men's vineyards while neglecting her own, the failures we have had to deplore will continue to be repeated and the final triumph of the Cross be indefinitely delayed.

What then is this specialization which Christianity represents and to which she should devote herself? The answer, in brief, is, the spiritual; and this involves the ethical. It is for her, like the prophet Elisha, to open the eyes of those who judge by sight, that the vision may be theirs of the invisible chariots and horsemen of Jehovah that move unseen about us through the material universe. Hers is the sublime task of keeping the veil uplifted that discloses the Infinite and Eternal; of kindling on the altar of the soul the sacred fires that, consuming the dross of our natures, send heavenward our holiest thoughts and aspirations. It is her business to preserve clear of all obstructions the narrow straits and channels through which the immortal part in man may daily approach the presence of God, and to disperse the clouds of earthly unbelief which continually obscure the silver-lit boundaries where the waves of this life are arrested by the mystic shores and headlands of the other. She is herself the connecting link between the terrestrial and celestial, the meeting-place of the tides, where the divine and human interblend; the very source and spring, like the great equatorial current which gives rise to the gulf stream, of that broad and mysterious influence which sweeps onward through the ocean depths of worldliness, and preserves the earth from the glacial blight of atheism and despair. And when she retains this consciousness, and when it is manifest in what she says and does, then to the world she herself becomes the very ladder seen by Jacob in his vision connecting earth with heaven, and on which the angels of God are ceaselessly ascending and descending. But when she is perpetually busy with tem-

poralities, striving to obtain territories, like any greedy commonplace power, and when she seeks recognition in every secular pursuit, then her real and special mission is lost sight of by herself and others, and in a little while becomes utterly distasteful.

This the history of the nineteenth century has frequently illustrated; and in guarding the twentieth from its baneful repetition, Christianity is called on to learn this much from the present age—that she can never be her best nor do her best unless she specializes, that is, unless she concerns herself almost exclusively with spiritual worship, spiritual culture, and spiritual service.

Worship is indispensable to the religious life. It is the soul's homage to the ideal perfection, it is the soul's acknowledgment of the realization of the ideal in the Supreme and Infinite Reality; and it is the soul's attitude of welcome and receptivity to every sacred impression emanating from the unseen. Worship brings the creature to the throne of the Creator; it delivers him from bondage to things of time and sense, and makes actual to him the divine possibilities of his own being. When he has become estranged from its offices, privileges, and sweet experiences, this world necessarily engrosses his thought, and gradually there fade away, and leave him cold and hard, those once cherished beliefs which exalted him to fellowship with "the glorious army of martyrs," with the "goodly fellowship of prophets," and inspired him with the transforming hope of immortality. Therefore, the decadence of worship always has marked the decline of the religious spirit, and always will. As well expect to be physically strong without the renewal derived from food and rest, as to be spirit-

ually vigorous without the heavenly manna and the repose that proceeds from adoring contemplation of the Everlasting Mystery. And never do worthy and good people more decisively reveal the limitations of their wisdom than when they talk slightingly of church services, of praise and "common prayer," and insinuate that these are superfluous, and that they may be neglected altogether without special detriment to the religious life. Such sentiments, more or less vaguely expressed, have gained considerable ground of late, and account in some degree for the vacant seats in many sanctuaries. Ruskin, we are told, was chilled and depressed by the absence of the beautiful and impressive from worship as conducted in a poor dissenting meeting-house, and went out into the night, where beneath the stately stars his soul could hold communion with God. But the average man is not a Ruskin, and will be more readily helped even by crude attempts of humble people like himself to find their way to heaven's throne than by all the constellations that make magnificent the vaulted sky. I cannot conceive of anything more damaging to the spiritual life of a community than the effort persistently, though often covertly, made to undervalue the benefits derivable from attendance on church services. This iterated and reiterated depreciation, not only tends to drive the soul from the altar of public devotion, but induces a painful apathy, a religious lethargy, which checks private prayer, inclines to skepticism, and not infrequently ends in spiritual insolvency.

So vitally necessary is worship, that Christianity should spare no pains in rendering it in every way worthy of the Being to whom it is addressed, and in every

way helpful to those by whom it is offered. The *insouciance* often manifested in the house of God, even by some of the professed followers of Christ, the upright bodies and open eyes in prayer, the listless attempts at praise or the positive unwillingness to join in sacred song, surely must be taken as signs of irreverence and indifference, and as vitiating the homage which avowedly is being paid to the Most High. As homage of this soulless kind is not creditable to the creature, very likely it is not acceptable to the Creator; and if such worshipers fail to receive a blessing and a quickening, it is because evidently they have no particular desire for either. The last twenty-five years have witnessed an increase of this undevout mood, conspicuously in several metropolitan centers, and perhaps more distinctively in America than in Europe. It is imperative that it should go no farther. Probably it has been encouraged by the flighty and extravagant estimates which have been placed on man's genius and power of late, and the relatively meagre attention which has been bestowed on the Divine attributes and gracious sovereignty. The human has occupied too large a place in thought and admiration, and we have forgotten that in proportion as it excites our wonder He who made it what it is ought to receive our adoring love. Overlooking this reasonable inference, men and women have "thought more highly of themselves than they ought to think," and while not abandoning the formal homage due the Almighty, they have withheld from it that dignified fervidness without which it is mere emptiness and show. But however caused, it should not continue; and as the new century dawns on the world, every denomination should do its utmost

by instruction, exhortation, and especially by reverent meditations on the ineffable greatness of God, to suppress the evil.

It is well known that helps to worship have frequently been sought in architecture, in painting, and in music. In medieval times the first achieved its most glorious triumphs. The Gothic cathedral, termed by Heine, "worship in stone," by its high springing arch, its lofty roof, and its marvels of mysticism in sculptured ornamentation, seems to be admirably fitted to awaken awe and devotion. Beautifully and truly does Ruskin write, when referring to the old builders:

> We have those fair fronts of variegated mosaic, charged with wild fancies and dark hosts of imagery, thicker and quainter than ever filled the depth of midsummer dream, those vaulted gates, trellised with close leaves, those window-labyrinths of twisted tracery and starry light; those misty masses of multitudinous pinnacle and diademed tower; the only witnesses, perhaps, that remain to us of the fear and faith of nations. . . They have taken with them to the grave their powers, their honors, and their errors, but they have left us their adoration.[1]

Something of this appreciation many in modern times have felt when visiting San Marco, Tintern and Melrose Abbeys, and the magnificent cathedrals of Milan and Rouen. And they have been painfully conscious of a difference in their feelings when they have returned to the angular and positively ugly chapels, with their stiff, highbacked pews, where they have been accustomed to pray and praise, or to the handsome building, carpeted and upholstered, and luxuriously furnished, more like the red-cushioned House of Lords in London than a

[1] "Seven Lamps of Architecture."

church, or to that greatest monstrosity of modern advanced religionism, that desires every one to feel free and easy when in the house of God, the sanctuary constructed to look as much like a theatre as possible. Discomfort is not conducive to piety, unless it be the acerbic and ascetic type; and mere elegance has never helped to deepen devotion; but every approximation to the theatre has worked against its very existence. While we cannot expect to return to the Gothic style, and while it might not be serviceable to do so, still the twentieth century should learn from the influence of architecture on religious sensibilities, to seek in the sacred edifices of the future such harmonious combinations, such glow of light and color, such veraciousness, tranquillity, and self-restraint, as will make them as far as possible what nature is, the vehicle of the Divine Spirit to the soul.

Painting has not the same claim on our confidence. It has never, in my opinion, proven itself an efficient instrument for the promotion of the purest and most exalted worship. The pictures of Leonardo, Raphael, and Michael Angelo, while challenging enthusiastic admiration, and while of a certain religious value, fail to kindle the fires of devotion, and rather tend to sensuousness in sacred solemnities than to spirituality. It is otherwise with music. The masterpieces of Titian and Correggio appeal altogether too directly to the passionate love of human beauty for them to aid in developing the higher life. But of the sister art, Luthardt has thoughtfully written: "The high, the truly moral destiny of music is to render sensible the harmonious emotions and images of a mind stirred by the revelation of God and his kingdom, by a poetry of sound as deeply felt as

it is artistic."[1] It has a moral destiny, and it may be added, a spiritual destiny as well. This is its chief characteristic. It is like the voice, the very borderland between the finite and the infinite, the seen and the unseen, the temporal and eternal. In its greatest perfection it is the child of the Reformation, and expresses, while it intensifies the deep unrest, the consuming enthusiasm, and the lofty aspirations of that sublime movement. While Gothic architecture symbolizes the stability of faith, and painting its creative energy, music is the sign of its progress, of its reaching out after the unattained, and of the endless variations, the contrasted and yet related, which mark its symphonic unfolding.

To its cultivation sufficient attention has not been given by modern churches, and yet they have not been so neglectful as were many of their predecessors. Some advance has been made, but much more remains to be done. Oratorios, or portions of such compositions, have lately been given, and with increasing frequency, in city congregations. They have usually been welcomed by immense gatherings of people, but unfortunately they have been sought rather as an entertainment than as a stimulus to worship. The crowds that attend them, by their disrespectful inattention during prayer, by their manifest impatience with the preacher, who apologetically assures them that he will not talk long, and by their impetuous haste to depart as soon as the last chorus is given, afford melancholy proof that they are not seeking God in the noble masterpieces of Haydn, Handel, Mozart, or Beethoven. They are merely bent on a higher kind of diversion, and everything, however worthy and

[1] "Moral Truths of Christianity."

beautiful in itself, that tends to encourage the idea that religious exercises are primarily designed to divert, is of immeasurable detriment to the spiritual life. If churches would only realize that the purpose of their public services is not merely to bring together a mass of people, but to promote worship, and that music itself should only be employed as a means to this end, then they would never introduce it in such a way as to degrade it to the level of an exhibition, and they would never fail to provide an ample place for prayer and preaching, it being as needful to think the thoughts of God after him as it is to pour out the soul in harmonious homage before him. And when this conviction is really felt, then there will be a purging of hymn and tune books of those jaunty ditties, those lovelorn melodies, and those jerky choruses, which have as little to do with praise as a bewildering shower of meteors has to do with the glorious rising of the sun.

But if worship is necessary to the religious life, so also is spiritual culture. The new birth is to be followed by a new training and development. And here again appears the specialization to which Christianity has been called. Upon her rests the obligation to educate the soul in heavenly knowledge, and to quicken its affinities and aptitudes for heavenly things. She is to free it from bondage to the material in philosophy, from the carnal in enjoyment, from the sordid in motives, and from the debasing in ambitions. There is no grander work than this. Secular learning is to be esteemed highly and to be prized greatly, but this spiritual culture rivals it in dignity and importance, and likewise imparts to it much of its charm and sweetness. They ought

never to be divorced. But as the professor of mathematics in a university does not teach languages, and each department is separated from the others, so the church, while co-operating with the college, is specially charged with her own peculiar task. While in doing her work she should recognize her limitations and not pretend to supervise college instruction, she should use her influence to prevent such instruction from becoming irreligious in tone if not in aim. She should strive to be so related to general education that the spirit of Christianity may permeate it through and through. But in other ways, by her preaching, her teaching, her Sunday-schools and her literature, she should promote the spiritual culture of the community at large. This end should never fade from view. But it is one of the sad possibilities that in giving heed to many demands on their strength and time ministers of the gospel may not always attach due importance to this part of their mission. The nineteenth century has known such cases, and warns the twentieth against them. It has known clergymen who rarely visited the Sunday-school, never catechized or sought to train the young, who infrequently, if at all, visited their parishioners, and then failed to inquire into the religious growth of the people, and in no real sense ever shepherded the flock. They were so preoccupied with club meetings, or with multitudinous lecture engagements, or with important social amenities, or with committees on every conceivable subject, that they could not possibly attend in any effective way to the principal business of their sacred calling, and as a result, their congregations not only declined in numbers, but deteriorated also in spiritual discernment,

susceptibility, and power. The nineteenth century says to preachers of the word as they enter on the twentieth, that if they would really serve and perpetuate Christianity, their chief duty must receive their chief concern, and all other services, admitting them within limits to be legitimate, must be undertaken only when they do not conflict therewith.

Adequate are the resources at their disposal for this work. They possess the sacred books, particularly the Gospels, with all their treasures of spiritual knowledge. The fitness of the Bible to beget and foster the religious life has been too frequently demonstrated for it now to be open to question. But more than this, during the centuries Christianity has accumulated a literature of surpassing richness, and in every way fitted to second the Bible in its quickening ministry. This is too little appreciated. And because a group of brilliant writers early in the history of the United States abandoned the evangelical faith, and produced some memorable volumes, the misleading impression has gone abroad that in comparison orthodoxy is intellectually unproductive. It were an ungracious task to take sides in this partisan controversy. But it may be admissible to quote the late Dr. James Martineau in support of the position that the literature which makes in the truest sense for spiritual culture, the only point we are here concerned with, has not proceeded from the school of thought with which he himself was identified, and of which he was the chief ornament in the nineteenth century:

"I am constrained to say," he writes in one of his essays, "that neither my intellectual preference nor my moral admiration goes heartily with the Unitarian heroes, sects, or productions of

any age. Ebionites, Arians, Socinians—all seem to me to contrast unfavorably with their opponents, and to exhibit a type of thought and character far less worthy, on the whole, of the true genius of Christianity. I am conscious that my deepest obligations, as a learner from others, are in almost every department to writers not of my own creed. In philosophy I had to unlearn most that I had imbibed from my early text-books and the authors in chief favor with them. In biblical interpretation I derive from Calvin and Whitby the help that fails me in Crell and Belshaw. In devotional literature and religious thought I find nothing of ours that does not pale before Augustine, Tauler, and Pascal, and in the poetry of the church it is the Latin or the German hymns or the lines of Charles Wesley or Keble that fasten on my memory and heart, and make all else seem poor and cold."

And having studied at the feet of these masters there was perfected in his own character the beautiful traits which he thus describes as distinguishing the saints of God:

Hence the quietude and evenness of all their ways; a certain gentle, solitary air that seems too mild to give out so much power, a half mystic reserve. . . The completest self-sacrifice gives the completest self-possession; only the captive soul which has flung her rights away has all her powers free. Simply to *serve* under the instant orders of the living God is the highest qualification for command.

In harmony with which is the sentiment of his two most remarkable hymns, the one beginning with:

Thy way is in the deep, O Lord,
E'en there I'll go with thee.

And the other:

A voice upon the midnight air
Where Kedron's moonlit waters stray.

Judged, therefore, by its effect on this great mind,

there can be no reason to doubt that the literature of evangelical Christianity is admirably fitted to promote spiritual culture. Its claim to popular consideration the churches should set forth lucidly and earnestly, for probably its neglect by the last generation accounts in no small degree for some of the religious aberrations and instances of faith-failure which we have been called on to deplore. When individuals concentrate their attention on such authors as Ibsen, what can we expect but mental desolation? Concerning the latest production of this writer, Tolstoy has just written:

> I have read his last drama, "If the Dead Wake." It is simply a delirium, and is devoid of life, character, and dramatic action. Thirty-five years ago such a drama would have been stifled by a cutting parody in the press, and the piece would have been ridiculed to death. How can one now speak of the serious tasks before the theatre? They are at an end.

No wonder, when the mind is supremely occupied with such works, when drivel and nastiness compete for the mastery, if something like ophthalmic disturbance should vitiate spiritual vision.

To neutralize poison of this kind, or better still, to prevent its being taken, Christianity should at the earliest period in the formation of character begin the cultivation of religious feelings, habits, and tastes. The nineteenth century has furnished innumerable "modern instances" of the "ancient saw" that "prevention is better than cure," or to render it in the speech of latest experience, "is easier than cure." Save the child if you would save society, is the conclusion of the wisest reformers; and save the child if you save Christianity, may be taken as an equally axiomatic principle. If it

is true that "the child is father to the man," it will also be found true that he cannot fail to be father to the church as well. All that Pestalozzi has written, all that Froebel has devised, and all that the magnificent endeavors of the last hundred years have accomplished on behalf of childhood, has accentuated the truth that the importance of beginning early to develop the life of the soul cannot be overestimated. This in some measure is appreciated by the followers of Christ, but it must take hold more and more on their reason and conscience if its beneficial results are to be wrought out in the immediate future. The Sunday-school must be rendered more efficient; ministers of the gospel must seek in it the sphere for their most effective ministrations; and parents must co-operate with its endeavors, and must supplement them far more than is common at present with home instruction and guidance. Many improvements have been suggested by General Booth, and whether we agree with him in every particular or not, one passage he has penned indicates the methods we should use, the hope we should cherish, and the possibilities to be realized in coming time, and is entitled to our consideration. He writes:

When the conditions named in the first pages of this volume are complied with—when the parents are godly, and the children are surrounded by holy influences and examples from their birth, and trained up in the spirit of their early dedication—they will doubtless come to know and love and trust their Saviour in the ordinary course of things, the Holy Ghost will take possession of them from the first. Mothers and fathers will, as it were, put them into the Saviour's arms in their swaddling clothes, and he will take them and bless them, and sanctify them from the very womb, and make them his own, without their knowing the hour

or the place when they pass from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. In fact, with such little ones it shall never be very dark, for their natural birth shall be, as it were, in the spiritual twilight, which begins with the dim dawn, and increases gradually until the noonday brightness is reached; so answering to the prophetic description, "the path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day"![1]

What specialism in the world surpasses this in sublimity and far-reaching consequences? And yet, though pastors are chiefly responsible before God and man for its application, there is not a theological seminary that I know of that affords its students an insight into child-nature or bestows any attention on child-culture. The graduates go out into the world as ignorant of these subjects as presumably they are of the intricacies of international diplomacy. They are not to be ambassadors representing imperialisms or republics, and they may, therefore, be excused if they have not mastered Vatel, Kent, and Puffendorf; but they are the Lord's commissioners sent to childhood and youth, and they can hardly be blameless if they have failed to qualify themselves for their momentous trust. But unfortunately the large majority of clergymen never seem to think of this. They have consequently very little to do with the religious training of the children of their parish; they are often received rather coolly in their own Sunday-schools, are sometimes politely told by people who know as little as themselves, if not less, that they would better not interfere with this department of church work. And in this way the preliminary stages of spiritual culture come under the direction of those who in the

[1] "Training of Children," p. 162.

majority of instances have had no special preparation for their task, and who are themselves the crudest of teachers. Then, having been guilty of this blundering, Christianity affects to be surprised that not a few parents are complaining and that multitudes of scholars are seemingly so little advantaged and that in several important centers the decline of faith is perceptible. But the nineteenth century at this hour is saying very bluntly to the church of the twentieth, that this astonishment is unwarranted, and that if she does not improve her methods, the alienation from her altars in communities where scientific secular education has progressed will increase more and more.

Spiritual service constitutes the third aspect of the specialization we are considering. It is well known that in ancient Israel various objects were able to impart a kind of sanctity to others. Thus the gift as soon as it touched the altar was declared holy; and, as Haggai sets forth, holy flesh carried in the skirt of a garment made the garment holy.[1] These distinctions, however, were purely ceremonial and not real, and find their counterpart to-day, not in some magical properties inherent in sacred places or vessels by which a new moral quality can be transferred to things profane, but in the duty and power of Christianity to inspire secular pursuits and earthly vocations, as light penetrates and irradiates the crystal, with the religious spirit. An eminent Australian scholar has recently said: "The function of the church is not to govern the world; it seeks rather to inspire the world. . . Its greatest gift to the world should be itself, and it is useful only when it is true to its own

[1] Haggai 2 : 12, 13.

ethos and spirit."[1] Just as the sun does not fashion the harvests, shape the flowers, or mold the waves of the sea and clouds of the sky, but imparts to them its own peculiar properties, by which they are beautified and glorified with many hues, and gilded with a shimmering lustre, the vegetable world receiving from its beam life as well as color, so the church is not sent to determine political platforms, to create commercial enterprises, or to make and order social institutions, but only and supremely to saturate them all with its light, and permeate them with its love. Ruskin rejoiced that he had discovered in the Church of St. Giacomo di Rialto, at Venice, this inscription: "Around this temple let the merchant's law be just, his weights true, and his covenants faithful." And this kind of influence should be exerted by Christianity on the world's business wherever she exists. From her altars there should stream forth a potent protest against every form of chicanery and fraud in trade. It is not for her to plunge into the wheat pit, or to send her representatives to strive with "bulls" and "bears" on stock exchanges, or even to conduct commercial ventures, but rather to become the very soul and conscience of the markets, small and great, where men and women are seeking gain. Nor can she serve society more directly and effectively than by thus projecting into the poisoned blood of modern traffic the anti-toxine of her own ethical spirit. And this relationship to what may be regarded as the mercantile side of her mission, illustrates what should be her connection with political movements and social improvements. The late archbishop of Can-

[1] Andrew Harper, "The Book of Deuteronomy."

terbury frequently alluded to the new place that "civism," as he liked to term it, had come to occupy in the pulpit. And Bishop Henry C. Potter explains this departure in a recent number of "The Churchman." He says:

> Late and slowly, but surely, I believe, the church is arising to the consciousness that to the great and grave social and industrial problems of our age she can no longer consent to be indifferent; that not only do they involve questions that concern her, and that in debating them she must, whether she would or no, find a voice and use it, but more than this, if only she has the wisdom to see and the courage to wield it, she holds in her hand the talisman which is to be the instrument of their solution. Hers alone is that better-world philosophy which can deal effectively with our social problems. May God arouse her to bring forth her talent from the napkin of its long disuse.

But what is this philosophy, this talisman? Doubtless it is embodied in the Golden Rule. It is not for the church to interfere in labor disputations as a demagogue, nor as a "walking delegate," nor is she to concern herself with the usual insults heaped upon her by the average brow-beating, mischief-making agitator. Her duty is simple. She must strive to convince all parties that the true principles on which the industrial world should be organized are contained in the gospel. These principles she should expound and illustrate, and toward their success she should contribute of her resources and energy. But this is not the same thing as undertaking to run factories and direct other departments of production and distribution on her own behalf. This is not going into trade herself, establishing Brook Farms or Oneida Communities, or engaging in similar ventures as principal and manager. In this age of specialism such undertak-

ings fail to command the attention of intelligent people. The mission of the church is to transform industrial relations and conditions, and not to administer its affairs. She is sent to spiritualize labor, to unfold its divine dignity, to guard it from the degradations that are inflicted on it by greed, and to surcharge it through and through with a sense of its own sacredness. It is for her to breathe the breath of heaven on the workshop; to impart to the artisan a consciousness of his nearness to the "Great Artificer"; and to teach employer and employed that the recognition of religious morality is the one thing necessary to the good understanding of both and the temporal prosperity of each.

But spiritual service does not end here. To render her ministry effective, to succeed in maintaining worship and in promoting the culture, which involves the soul's regeneration and its affiance with God through Christ, the organized church must go after the people, and not be content merely to invite them in a general way to come to her courts. The commission under which she acts commands her to "go"; and if she hesitates to comply with this injunction, and particularly if she practically excludes all but her own pewholders from the sanctuary, she sins against her Lord, travesties his religion, and by her exclusiveness creates a prejudice against Christianity which is felt even where more generous sentiments and more enlightened views prevail. It were better for the faith that every aristocratic congregation that hedges itself round by artificial society barriers, and that renders possible the ebullition of indignation that was provoked in a great city through the exclusion of a young lady from a seat in a pew owned

by a plutocrat, should become extinct; for the impression made by such bodies is thoroughly mischievous and misleading. Professor Seeley never uttered a truer word than when he said: "Christianity would sacrifice its divinity if it abandoned its missionary character and became a mere educational institution." And this is just the price she has to pay for the privilege of counting among her communities the little, fastidious, perfumed, self-satisfied groups and coteries, which are only entitled to the name of churches by courtesy, for by their own showing they are destitute of the catholic spirit, even if they do profess the catholic creed. Contemplating such upstart, purse-proud fellowships, the world without much hesitancy concludes that if what they represent is religion, then it is self-evidently of the earth, earthy. Of such bodies we may speak in the strong words of Dr. Clifford:

> You are so walled about by respectablility and smitten by the idolatry of social rank and corrupted by the falsehoods of the world that you no longer touch human life at its heart, or constrain us to think of you as the disciples of the Carpenter, who knew what was in man, and judged him, not according to the garb or speech, but in the light of his vast possibilities of redemption and uplift.[1]

Are they not then a positive evil, and would it not be better were they to disappear from civilization altogether? Only one better thing can I imagine; namely, that they should at once repent, confess their sins, and with genuine appreciation of the holy privilege devote themselves to spiritual service. "There is much land yet to be possessed," and the experiences of the last hundred

[1] Rev. John Clifford, M. A., D.D., "Federation of Free Churches."

years unite in calling on all the disciples of our Lord to join without respect to social standing or wealth in the noble enterprise of bringing mankind to the knowledge and acknowledgment of the truth. And when they with something like common consent hear the call, and appreciate the fact that they are to minister to others, and not demand that they themselves should be ministered unto, then will the world need no other apologetic to prove that the cross is the emblem of a faith born of God's great love and destined finally to re-create humanity in love.

As to the manner in which these disciples should prosecute their special work, and the spirit in which it should be undertaken and conducted, the religious message of the century has some practical suggestions to offer. It begins this part of its communication by condemning the unimpressible, impassible, passionless manner in which not a few church-members in days gone by have attempted to advance the cause of Christ, and by the commendation of heartiness and enthusiasm. Coldness and the Laodicean temperament, it reminds us, have ever proven fatal to progress. In the eighteenth century bishops in their pastoral charges usually warned their clergy against fervor and zeal, and they were fervently obeyed, if fervor in being precise, frigid, and icy is not a misnomer. Doctor Johnson said more than once, that "the clergy in their sermons used to put the apostles on trial every week on a charge of committing forgery." And as a result of this flat, dull, sluggish, unruffled conventionalism Christianity lost its hold on the age. Wags made merry over a faith that spoke of the soul's peril in terms of such polite and well-balanced restraint as

might fitly be employed by one lavendered courtier in congratulating another on the style of his wig or the cut of his coat, and sincere, earnest people simply thrust it aside with scorn as being too languid, benumbed, and soulless for it to be worthy of serious consideration. And since then, and down to the present hour, there have not been lacking in the pulpit preachers who have imitated the surpliced and Geneva-gowned glacial divines of former times, who have affected a sneering superiority over their gloomy and ardent evangelical fellow-laborers, and who have witnessed, without apparently any shock to their self-complacency, the gradual decline and inevitable extinction of their congregations. It may be suggested that these clergymen are to be praised for not affecting to feel more than they really do. Undoubtedly; but if they do not feel sufficiently the solemnity of their responsibility so as to be passionately in earnest, have they not mistaken their calling? And why should churches that owe their existence to the apostolic fervor of their founders, pay these stoical and torpid ministers comfortable salaries to destroy what has been built up at an incalculable cost of consuming devotion? These questions the twentieth century will probably answer in a very decisive and practical manner. It will not be so indifferent or so ready to yield to sentimental considerations as its predecessor, for it will perceive that its own well-being depends largely on spirituality, and only spirituality in its most real and intense form will be able to hold its own against the eager, breathless, and fiery pursuit of this world's goods in the future. In the interest of its own progress it will demand of the church that she rouse herself, that she be

as zealous in the furtherance of her specialism as the merchant, the soldier, or the scientist is in his, and that she cease consecrating to the loftiest vocation on earth colorless, lymphatic men, who have not sufficient intellect, to say nothing of heart, to feel deeply the tremendous import of their sublime calling.

The voice of the past concurs in the demand for increased enthusiasm. Not until the baptism of fire descended on the apostles were they qualified to spread "the glad tidings" throughout their own country and in the regions beyond. Enthusiasm, born of the Spirit, explains the wondrous career of Francis of Assisi, and the more marvelous ministry of Wesley and Whitefield. Whenever a great movement has commenced this strenuous intensity has appeared. It is to be discerned animating the masses that rushed forth to reclaim the holy sepulchre from the unbelieving Saracen. The Crusades were born of enthusiasm, and it inspired the Reformation, the abolition agitation, and every other notable endeavor for the betterment of mankind. Without it the discoveries of science would have been retarded; without it the explorations of desolate regions would have been impossible; and without it political revolutions would have failed, or what is more likely, would never have been attempted. Ever glorious is the army of enthusiasts, and proud ought any man or woman to be of a place, even the humblest, in its ranks, for it includes prophets, apostles, martyrs, and names more recent, such as Bruno, Galileo, Copernicus, Kepler, Morse, Edison, Garrison, Phillips, Wilberforce, Florence Nightingale, Julia Ward Howe, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Gladstone, Lincoln, Hugo, Henry Martyn, Mackay of Uganda,

Patterson, Moody, Spurgeon, and a host of others as bright as the stars and as uncountable. As well expect the hyperborean regions of the north to melt before the luminous streams of the Aurora Borealis, as to hope for any enduring victory to be won over ignorance, superstition, or tyranny, by the sunless and Arctic effulgence of coldly glittering intellectualism. Fire, though often dangerous, is more necessary to civilization than frost. The blacksmith's forge produces more useful articles than an iceberg, however large and glistening, and the earth warmed by the sun and rich in golden harvests and beautiful with flowers, is of more immediate profit and joy to mankind than the same earth sheeted and shrouded in snow. Enthusiasm is as indispensable now to mighty achievements as ever in days gone by, and if Christianity in the future is to accomplish anything worthy of her renown she must not despise its potent offices. The cross which Malize bore when sent to rouse the clans was ablaze and flaming, and was termed the "Cross of Shame," for to refuse its summons doomed the Highlander to infamy. And only a fiery cross can now startle the world to its religious responsibility, and none other will produce a sense of shame if its majestic summons is derided.

But further, the nineteenth century testifies, that in conducting her special mission Christianity should learn henceforth to do so consistently and in conformity with her exalted character. There are means and methods that may be employed in the interests of a noble cause, which though not necessarily disreputable or sinful in themselves, are totally unworthy of its dignity and derogatory to its claims. From such as these the religion

of Jesus has suffered much during the past twenty-five years. Endeavors have been made to draw people to church by the announcement of solos, brass bands, organ recitals, surpliced choirs, chalk sermons, stereopticon preachments, sacred concerts, and the experiencs of converted prize fighters, gamblers, and the like. Commenting on this state of affairs Rev. Archibald G. Brown wrote to the "British Weekly":

> The clap-trap of the day is degrading the work of Christ and demoralizing the people. It gives the infidel ground for saying,—as one did to my knowledge lately,—"Their Christ is played out." This remark was made as he pointed to a flaming bill outside a mission-hall announcing some special attractions. . . What would our grandfathers have said to such an announcement as this in connection with supposed evangelistic work: "Grand pictorial comic pantomime! Lots of fun and roars of laughter for everybody! Come early!"

This last is presumably an extreme case, but it shows to what lengths churches may go when they begin to bid for congregations by such worldly inducements. But it may be replied that congregations are necessary, and must be drawn somehow, and that it is far better to collect them by such means as these than for them not to be gathered at all. The conclusion, however, is not manifestly self-evident. What if the people are not made any better for the coming; what if they only seek amusement and acquire in the church a taste for theatrical exhibitions? And what if, seeing through the sham, they turn away disgusted from religion? Is any one so childish as to believe that a cornet solo performed by a young girl daintily gowned will have in it some sanctifying grace which the same instrument does not

possess when blown in a concert hall? Can any one be so infantile in his fancies as to suppose that an ordinary string band, perhaps playing waltz tunes slowly and inartistically, is at all fitted to help a distressed soul on to God? And if not, and if these appliances are only rivaling the big drum at the circus tent in a frantic effort to secure a crowd, would it not be just as well to leave the crowd to its wanderings? They may gain less harm on the streets than may come to them from the spectacle of a great religion employing cheap and paltry means to obtain a hearing. But there is no need to use such pitiable attractions. Let the people be convinced by the personal sympathy of the church, by her interest in their welfare, and by her solicitude to help them in their homes, that she is really their friend and is seeking their spiritual advancement, and there will be no necessity to publish humiliating advertisements of the variety show kind for the purpose of drawing them to the house of God.

The church, also, should be as circumspect and as blameless in raising money for her maintenance and for her particular work as in the methods adopted for the increase of congregations. Revenues are no more to be sought by unworthy schemes for religious purposes, than the pews are to be filled by notices that are an offense to self-respecting Christians. How can we expect to command revenue for the religion of Christ, when its supporters are not willing to put themselves out a little for the sake of meeting its pecuniary needs, but proceed to sell ice-cream and peddle crazy-quilts and bric-a-brac to supply the requisite funds? Can we imagine Dorcas selling oysters, or Priscilla presiding at a bazaar, or St. Paul

calling on the church at Jerusalem to hold a fair that he might have the means to establish a mission at Corinth? These things are inconceivable. The early disciples would never have dreamed of degrading the Cross in this manner to the level of a mere worldly enterprise. And in our day the commercial instinct is so unduly developed that we should imitate their example, for by insisting on free gifts without mercantile equivalents, it may be possible to avert from the age an increase of cupidity. But it may be answered by some anxious and troubled saint, that a bell ought to be in the church tower, or carpet on the church floor, an organ in the church choir, and even a church itself to hold the organ, carpet, and bell, and that without recourse to secular means, to tableaux, suppers, sales of fancy goods, these imperative demands cannot be supplied. It is not, however, quite clear that they are imperative. Perhaps they are not needed at all. To those who are otherwise minded it may not be amiss if they ponder this sharp remonstrance from the pen of a recent writer:

> What shall it profit a church if it gains enough money to pay its expenses, and loses its message and debauches the community? You say you could not have bought the carpet without the oyster supper—a carpet is not necessary for a church. You say you could not have bought the organ—a church can prosper without an organ. You say even the building could not have been paid for—a building is not essential. The apostolic church had no carpets, or organs, or edifices, but it was mighty and prevailed. The church of Christ was mightier in the Catacombs than it afterward was in the cathedrals. Better go without any of the supposed necessities of a church, and maintain the faith once delivered to the saints, than have organs and cushions and carpets and a spire, secured by methods which demoralize the community and deaden

the conscience of the professed followers of the Lord. But, you say, the minister's salary could not be paid in any other way. Then let him go. That proves that he is not needed. There are too many churches in the majority of places, and if a church is too weak to feed and clothe a minister, then it is time for that church to give up the ghost.

There is never a necessity for anything that cannot be legitimately provided for, that is, provided for in such a way as not to contradict and subvert the very object for which the money is secured. Were Christianity an impoverished institution, and were it rapidly tending toward financial embarrassment, it would not be justified in securing revenues by appealing to the trade spirit in man. But as it is, with its enormous resources, it is inexcusably guilty if it falls back on measures which are essentially mercenary. Were church-members simply to do their duty, and every one bear his part in meeting the expenses incurred for the support of the gospel, there would not be this constant exhibition of approaching insolvency and this constant unedifying struggle for the possession of funds which have scandalized Christianity of late. The impression has been made by the unwillingness of many professors of religion to contribute of their means, that they have lost confidence in the Faith, or that they are willing to enjoy its benefits and leave the world to pay the bills. This, however, is an untenable conclusion. The explanation lies in a different direction. Making allowance for quite a number of alleged Christians who are shamelessly stingy and penurious, there are other causes at work which account for the frantic and questionable efforts put forth to supply the Lord's treasury. Among these may be noticed the fail-

ure on the part of officials to devise and supervise an adequate financial system in the churches; the unwillingness to hold members strictly to their obligations; and a weak, nerveless administration in temporal things; also the constant multiplication of benevolent projects on the option often of flighty and irresponsible individuals, and the building of meeting-houses and schools for which there has been no public demand, and which have been undertaken without conference and without reasonable financial backing. It is the utter welter and confusion that reigns through no inconsiderable part of the church on money matters that occasions so much misunderstanding and leads to so many undignified schemes. Considering this, it is a marvel that she has contributed as much as she has for the advancement of religion, and the magnificent sums she has given go to prove that she is under no necessity to degrade herself by invoking the aid of traffic to supply her needs, and that, were she to be more thorough and systematic, she could easily increase her revenues and abandon the show business for good and all.

The nineteenth century, reviewing her experiences, exhorts her to reform her financial methods. They have impaired her standing and authority in the past, and they cannot be continued without more disastrous consequences in the future. And then the old century, having conveyed this admonition, concludes its religious message by addressing a few words to the new.

Among all the blessings conferred on coming time none can equal in worth and in extent the grace and influence of Christianity. Admitting her defects as she appears in history, conceding her melancholy failures at

various points, nevertheless, no other institution compares with her in the range of her benefactions and in the scope of her mission. The past century bears witness to her benevolence and beauty, to her preciousness and power. Wherever during the last hundred years a wrong has been righted, a shackle has been broken, a wound has been healed, a burden has been lightened, she has not been absent from the scene. What the sun is to nature, that Christianity has been to society. The highway of gold in the sea, the brilliant and transfiguring colors in the evening clouds, the flush of health on the cheek of maidenhood, the ripening richness of fruits and harvests, the coal-fire blazing on our hearth, the gas and electric light illuminating our chambers, and the very forces by which machinery is impelled, are all the products of the chief orb in the solar system. And as the sun is the prolific source of inestimable benefits to the earth, so Christianity has been the mother of innumerable mercies to the suffering and struggling world. If childhood laughs more freely and more sweetly, if womanhood walks more independently and safely, if manhood toils more cheerfully and hopefully, if brotherhood prevails more generally and absolutely, and if priesthood has lost much of its brutal bigotry, and statehood much of its tyrannous might, she is to be praised, for to her heavenly ministry these blessings are largely due.

The nineteenth century is saying to the twentieth: You cannot afford to dispense with her sacred offices. Were you to do so, your activities would gradually reduce you to the level of a machine; your wealth would multiply luxuries and undermine your moral strength;

and your pursuit of amusement, to compensate for loss of trust in diviner things, would end in base tastes and an indisposition to labor; and when the usual course of deterioration had been run you would entail on your successor the infamy of a Pompeii and Herculanæum, on whose ruined walls no trace of Christian morality, or faith, or hope has been discovered. Let the twentieth century then be wise and hospitable. Instead of rejecting, let it accept, and prepare a way for the progress and triumph of the Cross. In the former times its progress has been impeded by harsh criticisms, by senseless caricature, by heartless ridicule, and ungenerous insinuations; but surely in the future, more enlightened and less barbarous, such treatment should be out of date.

If it shall prove so, and if the services of Christianity shall no longer be depreciated, and if her importance to society is more candidly recognized by society itself, then we may anticipate for her grander achievements in future years than in the past; and more than this, a development of her graces and resources unparalleled in her history. She cannot stand still; she must progress. Gradually she is approximating toward the realization of a sublime ideal; and, conditions favoring, the day may not be far away when the world shall cease to be distracted by such solecisms as the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Catholic Church; and when from all denominations there shall emerge the final Christianity, THE CHRISTIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, holding to the universal Fatherhood of God, the universal brotherhood of man, the universal atoning priesthood of Christ, all wrought together through the universal Eternal Spirit into the universal kingdom, on whose boundaries the

sun shall never set, and against whose power the gates of hell shall nevermore prevail. Yes, it is coming! All signs point to its approach, and however the hearts of men may falter and fear, and however they may construe difficulties into prophecies of dire disaster, the instructed ear cannot be deaf to the sweet promises sounding in the closing hours of the nineteenth century concerning the spiritual unfolding and the social infolding of Christianity in the twentieth.

I hear a song
Vivid as the day itself ; and clear and strong
As of a lark—young prophet of the noon—
Pouring in sunlight his seraphic tune.

He prophesies—his heart is full—his lay
Tells of the brightness of the peaceful day !
A day not cloudless, nor devoid of storm,
But sunny for the most and clear and warm.

He sings of brotherhood, of joy, and peace,
Of days when jealousies and hate shall cease ;
When war shall die, and man's progressive mind
Soar unfettered as its God designed.

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